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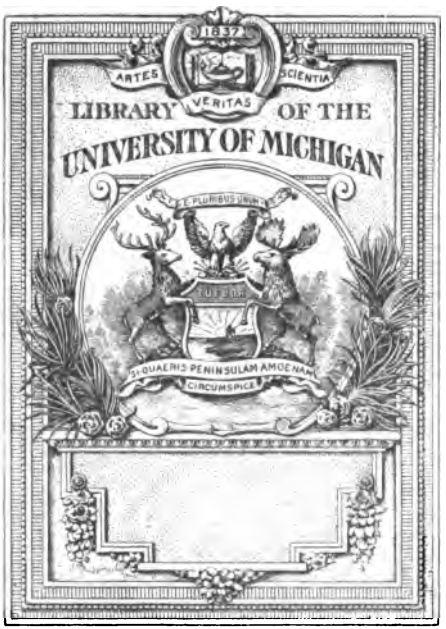
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WHY ANOTHER SECT:

CONTAINING A

REVIEW OF ARTICLES BY

BISHOP SIMPSON AND OTHERS

ON THE

FREE METHODIST CHURCH.

BY REV. B. T. ROBERTS, A. M.

"He that is first in his own cause, SEEMETH just: but his neighbor cometh and searcheth him."—Prov. xviii, 17.

ROCHESTER, N. Y.:
"THE EARNEST CHRISTIAN" PUBLISHING HOUSE.
1879.

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By BENJAMIN T. ROBERTS,

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DEDICATION.

Paul, in writing to the Hebrew Christians, says: "But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions; partly, whilst ye were made a gazing stock, both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used. For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance."—Heb. x, 32–34.

The spirit of primitive Christianity still survives. When a number of preachers were expelled from the Genesee Conference of the M. E. Church, on account of their fidelity to God, there were those that rallied around them and held up their hands.

To those who gladly suffered, for Christ's sake, exclusion from privileges which they prized, and from churches which they had helped build, this simple narrative of events in which they participated, is inscribed by their brother,

B. T. ROBERTS.

274194

PREFACE.

Twenty years ago, I sat in a little room in the village of Perry, Wyoming County, N.Y., awaiting the verdict of the Genesee Conference of the M. E. Church, which was to sever me from religious associations which I had formed, as I supposed, for life. I was a Methodist from conviction; and as a Methodist preacher I had endeavored to do my duty. My ministry had been successful; and my standing, both among the people, and in the Conference, was all that I could have desired. But issues came up, relating to the nature of the religion which we were to spread, and I felt called upon to take sides with Methodism as we had received it from the fathers—with holiness and truth. But the ruling influence was against us, and its leaders were exasperated by their growing unpopularity with the people. While awaiting their decision—a decision which I had no doubt had been pre-determined upon before the trial begun, I was troubled most with the reflection that now we should have nothing to do in the blessed cause of God. But immediately I seemed to hear the voice of the Master saying, "I will give you plenty to

do." I opened my Bible to these words, which were applied to my heart with all the force of a direct revelation: "Therefore thus saith the LORD, If thou return, then will I bring thee again, and thou shalt stand before me: and if thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth: let them return unto thee; but return not thou unto them. And I will make thee unto this people a fenced brazen wall: and they shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail against thee: for I am with thee to save thee and to deliver thee, saith the LORD."—Jer. xv, 19, 20. These words have given us encouragement and strength ever since.

The next evening, the large Baptist church of the village was opened, and to a crowded, sympathizing audience, the expelled ministers set forth, at length, the issues on which we were thrust out. From that day to this, we have not lacked the sympathy and fellowship of devout people of all denominations.

When the committee of the General Conference of 1860, selected to hear our appeal, refused, in utter violation of a plain provision of the Constitution of the M. E. Church, to entertain it, I said, I APPEAL TO GOD AND THE PEOPLE. This appeal has been entertained; and, so far as we have the means of knowing,

the decision has been favorable. Here we should have let the matter rest, but those opposed to us will not permit it. They have published, and sanctioned the most bare-faced, flagrant falsehoods, which they intend shall pass as a history of the affair. We should be wanting in our duty to the cause which is dearer to us than life, and to the noble men and women who have given us their confidence, if we allowed these falsehoods to pass uncontradicted.

With the doctrines and government of the M. E. Church we have no controversy. For many of its ministers and members we have a sincere respect and affection. But its General Conference, its highest representative body, has committed against us, and others, acts of the greatest injustice. In making this charge we have no resentment to gratify. They meant it for evil—God meant it for good.

God has always had a church upon earth. It is one in spirit—in outward forms many. Anciently there was one Israel—but twelve tribes. In former years the most bloody persecutions arose from the effort to produce uniformity where God meant there should be only unity. At the present, the most fierce, relentless, bigoted sectarians are those who make it their business to denounce all sects. Reforms in the

church have generally been effected by new organizations which have re-acted upon the old, and infused into them new life and vigor. The Roman Catholic Church was greatly improved by the formation of Protestant churches. The Established Church of England has been more spiritual in its tone, and more evangelical in its teachings since the days of Wesley and Whitefield. In this country the mouths of Methodist preachers were closed on the subject of slaveholding, until the Wesleyan church was organized. After that event, those who advocated the rights of the slaves were not persecuted, for fear they would join the Wesleyans.

So, the FREE METHODIST CHURCH is exerting a salutary influence upon the parent body. Doctrines and practices which would scarcely be tolerated when we were thrust out, are becoming popular. The REV. WM. B. OSBORNE, one of the most devoted, self-sacrificing leaders of the Holiness Movement, now of the India Conference, said at one of our camp meetings in New Jersey: "*I have come fifty miles to thank the Free Methodists for the privilege I have of preaching holiness in the M. E. Church, unmolested.*" No notice is taken of ministers in that church who publish in the papers articles which reflect upon the church

much more severely than the one did for writing which we were expelled.

The multiplication of sects which do not differ essentially from those already in existence is to be deplored. But the FREE METHODIST CHURCH is not one of this kind. It is the only one with which we are acquainted that requires of every person, who joins it in full connection, to give an affirmative answer to the question, "Have you that perfect love which casteth out fear? If not, will you diligently seek until you obtain it?" In all its church edifices it is required—not that there be free seats—but that all the seats be free. It has a mission from God to hold up the New Testament standard of religion; and to preach the Gospel to the poor. In this work it should not be embarrassed by untrue and slanderous reports as to its origin, in books claiming the dignity of a history, or the arch-dignity of an encyclopedia.

With the leading facts which I narrate in this volume, I was personally acquainted. I have endeavored to state them plainly, in a Christian spirit, and without the slightest exaggeration. I have given proofs which can not be set aside without practically denying the validity of human testimony. But I am conscious of laboring under this great disadvantage: the action of the Genesee Conference,

sustained by the General Conference, was so unjust and unprovoked—so contrary to anything which we might look for in a body of respectable men, even though they laid no claim to piety, that the plainest narrative of the events, looks like wild exaggeration. But I have endeavored to give the simple truth, without the slightest coloring. I have read my manuscript to several intelligent, judicious brethren, familiar with the the facts, and they give it their hearty indorsement.

It is but justice to say, that notwithstanding our position on secret societies, some well known Masons, both in the Conference and out of it, stood by us heartily through the entire conflict. They insisted that it was a gross perversion of Masonry, to use it as a means for controlling the affairs of a church.

There are some who judge of actions by the position occupied by those who do them. From such we do not expect a favorable verdict. There are others who feel free to condemn a wrong, whoever perpetrates it, and we ask the candid attention of these to the following pages. B. T. ROBERTS.

ROCHESTER, N.Y., AUGUST 6, 1879.

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WHY ANOTHER SECT.

CHAPTER I.

BISHOP SIMPSON ON THE FREE METHODIST CHURCH.

"The Cyclopedia of Methodism," is a new book, edited by M. Simpson, D. D., one of the Bishops of the M. E. Church.

A cyclopedia is a book which no one should write without the utmost candor, and great patience of research. The brilliancy of imagination which may fit one to shine as an orator or an essayist, should have no play in compiling sober facts, or established truths. A history is often read for entertainment, as well as for instruction; but a cyclopedia is useful only as a book of reference; and if its statements can not be relied upon, it is worthless.

Of the necessity of fairness the Bishop appears to have been fully mindful when he wrote his preface, and singularly forgetful when he admitted his article on "The Free Methodist Church." This article contains several important misrepresentations. This we undertake to establish to the satisfaction

of every candid mind, notwithstanding the difficulty of proving a negative.

We do not charge the Bishop with wilfully misrepresenting a single fact. With his motives we have nothing to do. We would not, knowingly, do him the slightest injustice. But false statements, coming from a reputable source, do not need to proceed from malice, to be capable of doing so much harm as to demand correction.

Soon after reading the article referred to, we wrote the Bishop as follows:

ROCHESTER, N. Y., SEPT. 13, 1878.

REV. M. SIMPSON, D. D.,
Bishop of the M. E. Church.

DEAR SIR: I think when one makes incorrect statements, he should have the privilege of correcting them. I therefore take the liberty to address you in reference to the article in your "Cyclopedia of Methodism," on the Free Methodist Church. In your preface you say: "The aim has been to give a fair, and impartial view of every branch of the Methodist family. For this purpose, contributors and correspondents were selected, as far as practicable, who were identified with the several branches, and who from their position, were best qualified to furnish information as to their respective bodies."

Either no such selection was made from the Free Methodists, or the information which they furnished, with the exception of the bare statistics, was not

given to the public in that article. In either case, what becomes of the claim of fairness?

In this article there are some fifteen statements or re-statements, which are utterly untrue, and some five or six statements which, though in a sense true, yet are, from the manner in which they are made, misleading.

If furnished with proof, satisfactory to candid minds, that these statements referred to are untrue, and misleading, will you correct them in the church periodicals, and in future editions of your book? If not, will you give the authority upon which the statements complained of, are made?

Yours most respectfully,

B. T. ROBERTS.

To this the Bishop replied as follows:

PHILADELPHIA, OCT. 23, 1878.

REV. B. T. ROBERTS.

DEAR SIR: Returning home from a long tour in the west, I find your letter of September 13th, complaining of inaccuracies in the article on Free Methodism, but without specifying what those inaccuracies are.

I am not aware of any incorrect statements in the article, but if you will furnish me with corrections and the accompanying proofs, I will gladly make any alterations in a future edition, should such edition be called for. I desire to have perfect accuracy in every article, and it will give me as much pleasure to correct, as it can you to furnish the corrections.

Yours truly,

M. SIMPSON.

On reading this letter, the intelligent reader will notice:

1. That the Bishop fully assumes the responsibility for the accuracy of the article in question.

2. That he does not, even if convinced of inaccuracies, offer to correct them, *until a future edition of his book is called for*, and not at all *unless such edition* is called for, leaving the article, meantime, to create all the prejudice, and do all the injustice of which it is capable.

3. That he gives no authority for his statements.

4. That he does not profess, as claimed in his preface, in order "to give a fair and impartial view" of this "branch of the Methodist family," to have selected a "contributor" from the Free Methodists who was "identified" with it, and who, "from his position was best qualified to give information" as to his particular body. Nor does he give any reason why this was not considered "practicable." In the city where he resides, were men capable of giving such information!

We copy, from the Cyclopedia, the article which contains the statements of which we complain. For the sake of reference, we have marked the clauses which we consider untrue, with figures; and those which are mislead-

ing, with letters. We give the article entire, except the statistics.

"THE FREE METHODIST CHURCH."

"The organization of the Free Methodist Church dates from August 23, 1860, at a convention composed of ministers and laymen, who had been members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, but became [a]dissatisfied with the workings of its government. Though organized at that date, the movement commenced several years earlier, within the bounds of the Genesee Conference, and originated in an [1]association of ministers, who [2]thought they had not been properly treated by the leading men of the conference. [3]They privately adopted a platform, and in this [4]organization were known as 'Nazarites.' In their writings, and speeches, they complained of the decline of spirituality in the church, [b]charging the church with tolerating, for the sake of gain, the worldly practices of its members, and its departure, both in doctrine and discipline, from the teachings of the fathers. [c]They professed themselves to be moved by the Holy Spirit, and believed it was their duty to bear open testimony against what they alleged to be the sins of the church. This [5]organization, and its [6]publications, containing such charges against the leading members of the Conference, led in 1855, to a very unpleasant state of feeling, and resulted in various church trials. In [7]1858, two of the leaders were expelled from the Conference; they appealed to the ensuing General Conference, held at Buffalo in 1860; but as they had [8]declined to recognize the authority of the church, and [9]had continued to exercise

their ministry, and to organize societies, the General Conference declined to entertain the appeal. Even previous to the trial, [10]some of the ministers had established appointments, and [11]organized societies in opposition to the regular church services.

At the organization of this church in 1860, they accepted the doctrines of Methodism, as contained in the Articles of Religion, and placed a special stress on Christian perfection, or sanctification. They added an additional article which says: 'Those that are sanctified wholly, are saved from all inward sin, from evil thoughts and evil tempers. No wrong temper, none contrary to love, remains in the soul. All their thoughts, words and actions, are governed by pure love.

Entire sanctification takes place subsequently to justification, and is the work of God, wrought instantaneously upon the consecrated, believing soul. After a soul is cleansed from all sin, it is then fully prepared to grow in grace.'

They also added a second article on future rewards and punishments.

[c]In church polity, the name of bishop was abandoned, and a general superintendency substituted. The [d]conference organizations were retained as in the M. E. Church, and laymen, in numbers equal to the ministers, were admitted into each of these bodies. [e]The name of presiding elder was changed to that of district chairman. No one is admitted as a member, even after probation, without a confession of saving faith in Christ. The [12]reason alleged by them is, that much of the defection in other Methodist churches, is due to the fact that multitudes who have joined the

church as inquirers, have failed to pursue a strictly spiritual life. [12]They also require their members to be exceedingly plain in their dress, and they prohibit any one connected with the church from being a member of any secret society. They require not only abstinence from intoxicating liquors, but also from the use of tobacco, except as a medicine.

In its early history, some of its leaders encouraged a spirit of wild [13]fanaticism, claiming [14]the power of healing by the laying on of hands. In [15]many cases the excitement connected with their meetings passed into extravagance, which was sanctioned by their leading men, as being evidence of the influence of the Holy Spirit. As the denomination has progressed, and has extended its boundaries, though their services are still characterized by much fervor, there is less of these manifestations. The Free Methodist Church is confined almost exclusively to the Northern states. There are at present ten annual conferences, which report for 1876, the following statistics."

We give statistics in full in the appendix.

CHAPTER II.

NAZARITE ORGANIZATION.

Men sometimes become so impressed with hearing a matter frequently repeated that they finally believe it, not only without evidence, but in opposition to positive evidence to the contrary. This appears to be the case with Bishop Simpson, in reference to the "Nazarite Union," or "Band." That there was such an organization among the members of the Genesee Conference of the M. E. Church, was confidently affirmed, both in private and through the press; though we can hardly see how it is possible that those making such affirmation did not know that it was false. But the statement is still made, as confidently as though it were a conceded fact.

It was talked of at the time as fully proved, by those who opposed the doctrine of holiness, as specially advocated by the men who were charged with being members of such an organization. Official papers of the Church helped on the delusion. Though it was emphatically denied by those members of the Genesee Conference who had knowledge of the matter, and who were supposed to belong to the

"Nazarite Band," no notice whatever was taken of their denial. And from Bishop Simpson's book, it appears that the statement is still clung to with great pertinacity. Is it on the principle that a story often told is at last believed? Or is it because it is the only shadow of an excuse that can be made for an act of ecclesiastical tyranny and proscription, which, looking back upon after the lapse of twenty years, we deliberately pronounce to be without a parallel in modern times, for its injustice?

We shall give proofs so conclusive that no such organization ever existed, as to forever set the question at rest with every person who lays the slightest claim to candor.

And first, we call attention to the following paper, which was prepared and signed by the men who were supposed to be prominent in the "Nazarite organization." It was published at the time in the *Northern Independent*, and in a fly-sheet form. A copy was given to Bishop Simpson.

"GENESEE CONFERENCE MATTERS.

READ AND THEN JUDGE.

Certain reports having been put into circulation, charging a portion of the Ministers of the Genesee Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, with the disreputable and unworthy act, of having organ-

ized a society "bearing certain marks of secrecy" under the name of the "Nazarite Band or Union," the object of which, it has been reported, is to control the appointments, and direct the affairs of the Conference; and this charge implicating many of our Ministers as taking steps unworthy the Christian, and derogatory to the Ministerial character:

Therefore, We, the undersigned, Members of the Genesee Conference, hereby declare, that after careful inquiry, we are fully convinced that no such society has ever existed in the bounds of this Conference. The whole excitement with reference to the supposed organization, grew out of certain letters, indicating the existence of such a society, written by a single individual, who, on the floor of the Olean Conference in 1855, publicly declared, that he alone was responsible for the whole affair. These letters were written without our knowledge, and have never received our approval. Though the existence of such a society has been repeatedly denied, in various ways and on numerous occasions, yet in public and in private, and especially through the columns of the *Buffalo Christian Advocate*, these reports have been spread abroad, to the injury of the Ministerial reputation, and Christian influence and usefulness of numbers of our Ministers, by creating an unjust prejudice against them; among whom are some of our most able and efficient men.

Connected with the charge of association, is that of encouraging fanaticism, and extravagance in religious exercises and worship. This charge we declare to be as groundless as the other. We have never encouraged excesses, and with them we have not the

least sympathy. But while we stand opposed to all improprieties in religious exercises and worship, we declare ourselves in favor of a *consistent* and *vitalized* religion; not a dead formalism, but the power of Godliness. Not that form of religion that expresses itself in confused irregularities on the one hand, or on the other, in sermons without life and without adaptation,—the abandonment of social meetings, and the neglect of family and private prayer; but in a religion that moves the heart, and prompts to every good work; not of beneficence alone, but also of devotion.

These charges then, of forming an association or encouraging fanaticism, having their origin, in the opinion of some, in ambition and jealousy; made and reiterated, it has been feared, with a design and for effect—*if applied to us*, we unhesitatingly pronounce to be unjust, iniquitous, *slanderous* and FALSE.

A. ABELL,	ISAAC C. KINGSLEY,
JOHN P. KENT,	C. D. BURLINGHAM,
SAMUEL C. CHURCH,	A. HARD,
LORREN STILES, JR.,	B. T. ROBERTS,
JOHN B. JENKINS,	E. S. FURMAN,
W. GORDON,	R. E. THOMAS,
A. W. LUCE,	DANIEL B. LAWTON,
J. MILLER,	WM. KELLOGG,
Le Roy, September 1857.	J. BOWMAN."

The seventeen members of the Genesee Conference who signed this emphatic denial, were prominent among those commonly designated as "Nazarites." If there was any such associ-

ation, they must have known it; for they were the men of whom this association was said to be, in the main, composed. Five of the number had been presiding elders, and four of them members of the General Conference. *Out of the entire number, only three were ever members of the Free Methodist Church.* One we believe, afterwards joined the Presbyterians, another, the United Brethren. The rest, so far as we know, are either in the M. E. Church, or remained in it until they died. Some of them, in process of time, became the most bitter enemies of the Free Methodist Church. Yet we have never heard that any of them ever made any statement, inconsistent with what they here say.

That these men were in circumstances to know the truth of what they affirm, no one can question. Does Bishop Simpson, does any one believe that these seventeen men, and ministers of the Gospel, deliberately published what they *knew to be false?* Did the Bishop appoint, from year to year, to take charge of churches, and guide souls to Heaven, men who, as he believed, loved and made and published a lie, and stuck to it? Would the Bishop have the public understand that deliberate, wilful, persistent falsehood does not disqualify men from being pastors in the

Methodist Episcopal Church? Is it Christian charity to lay, without evidence, seventeen ministers of the Gospel—some of whom died, to all appearance, in holy triumph—under the imputation of wilful falsehood, in a matter concerning which they could not possibly be mistaken?

There is a plain, an irreconcilable contradiction between the statement of the Bishop, and the statement of these men. The Bishop says of the Free Methodist movement, that it commenced "Within the bounds of the Genesee Conference, and originated in an association of ministers who thought they had not been properly treated by the leading men of the Conference. They privately adopted a platform, and in this organization were known as Nazarites." These seventeen men say: "We hereby declare that, after careful inquiry, *we are fully convinced that no such society has ever existed in the bounds of this Conference.*"

They investigated the subject under circumstances the most favorable possible for a thorough investigation. They were themselves not only suspected, but openly accused of being members of such an association. If there were any such members, apart from themselves, these men, their friends, would have found it out. They declare that they

made "careful inquiry." And the result left no doubt upon their minds. They say they are FULLY CONVINCED. Their denial is not in the cautious, evasive language of those who seek to conceal the truth under a specious subterfuge. It is open, frank, and comprehensive. They do not deny merely that there is a Nazarite organization,—leaving the suspicion on the mind that there *was* one, but it had been dissolved—but they are "*fully convinced that no such society has ever existed* in the bounds of this Conference." They not only give the result of their inquiry as to others, but with reference to themselves they say: "This charge of forming an association or encouraging fanaticism, *if applied to us*, we unhesitatingly pronounce to be unjust, iniquitous, *slanderous*, and FALSE." Is it possible to form a denial more specific, and more comprehensive? Either their statement is false, or the statement of the Bishop is false. There is no possible way to reconcile them.

The Bishop does not profess to speak from personal knowledge. Relying upon information, he might easily be deceived. These seventeen ministers do profess to speak from personal knowledge. They could not possibly be deceived. If their statement is untrue, it is knowingly, and from set purpose, untrue.

In addition to signing the foregoing denial, the Rev. Asa Abell, in an article published in the *Northern Independent*, March 10th, 1859, says:

"It does seem to me that I have been so circumstanced, that had there really been any such Union or Society, it could not have failed to come to my knowledge; and I solemnly declare that I neither know *now*, nor have ever known of any society called by the name in question, neither in form nor in fact: nor of any association like to the one whose existence is so boldly and positively asserted; nor of any such league or combination whatever, by any name whatever.

All this I intend to assert, without any such mental reservation as would leave what I say to be true, and yet in some hidden and mysterious sense true, that there is, or has been such an organization or society. No man has yet proved, and I am sure no one ever can prove, the existence of such a league or society, for the reason that no one can prove a *non*-entity to be an entity. I never knew or heard of any meeting for the purpose of forming such a society, or league, or union, nor of any meeting of any such society; nor of any meeting of reputed officers of any such society."

In a matter of this kind the personal character of the witnesses is to be considered. With that of the Bishop we have nothing to do. We may concede, in this respect, all that his warmest friends may claim for him. For he

does not assert that he ever attended a meeting of the "association," or that he is a personal witness in the matter. He gained his knowledge from others. All experience has shown that it is not difficult to impose on one of a generous and confiding nature. Free from guile himself, he is slow to suspect that those to whom he has given his confidence, and who stand in the relation to him of personal friends and official advisers, can practice deception upon him. So that in showing the falsity of the statements of the Bishop, we make no reflection upon him. But the character of these seventeen men is an important element in this investigation. They are voluntary witnesses, who come forward, in order to remove an unjust aspersion, and who speak in relation to a matter which they were generally supposed to understand; and which they claimed to understand. Are they men to be believed? Is their general character such as to render them credible witnesses? We know of but one of the entire number whose character for veracity was ever called in question. We will leave him out. As to the rest, they are men whose testimony would be given full force in any court of justice, in any concern, however important. Some of them were men who spent long and useful lives in the ministry.

Asa Abell was one of the pioneers of Methodism in Western New York. He joined the Genesee Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1821. During his long and remarkably successful ministry, he was presiding elder for eighteen years. He was a member of four successive General Conferences of the Church. When the Free Methodist Church was organized, he showed his devotion to the principles he had always advocated, by voluntarily severing his connection with the Church to which he had given the best energies of his life; and uniting with a few proscribed and persecuted men, when, as yet, it was doubtful whether they would be able to maintain their existence, as a denomination. During his long life, even the breath of calumny never dared whisper anything against his fair name.

John P. Kent was in the ministry for a longer period, and always bore a reputation above reproach. He never left the M. E. Church, but is an honored, superannuated minister.

The records of the Genesee Conference of the M. E. Church say of Rev. Samuel C. Church, D. D.: "His conscientiousness would not allow him to be a neutral. His good sense and generosity kept him from mere partisanship."

Charles D. Burlingham was an able, upright, genial-hearted man, loyal to the M. E. Church, in which he died an acceptable, respected minister. The minutes of the Western New York Conference of the M. E. Church for 1875, say: "Brother Burlingham was a man of superior talents, a man of culture and sound piety, an able writer and preacher, an excellent pastor, greatly respected and loved by all who knew him. His departure was unexpected and sudden, yet he was fully prepared; and died as he had lived, a true Christian, an honored and faithful minister of Christ."

Did Bishop Simpson, in his large experience with men, ever know one more conscientious and God-fearing than Amos Hard? Who, ever questioned his honesty of purpose? Is it possible for a man to give a better proof of genuine piety than this man did, down to the sudden end of his useful, self-denying life? Of him the minutes of the Genesee Conference of the M. E. Church for 1878, say: "Brother Amos Hard, as a Christian was thorough and earnest. He tolerated nothing superficial in himself, or others. In the words of his life-long friend, Rev. Dr. Reddy, 'He abhorred all shams.' His study and prayer to find out what the Bible meant by 'holiness,' his hun-

ger for its experience, his wrestlings and fastings, and rigorous self-testings, and the unutterable sweetness of divine love, with which his whole soul was filled, as related by himself, constitute one of the most vivid pictures of a Christian mightily in earnest. 'Measured by the standard of success in winning souls to Christ, few have gone from among us to a richer reward, or leaving behind a more glorious record."

In making up a history of events in which such men bore a prominent part, is their testimony respecting these events to be set aside, without even assigning any cause? Is it to be assumed, without evidence, that they placed themselves on record as falsifiers of facts with which they were well acquainted? And is such assumption to pass into history unchallenged? Is partisan prejudice, or denominational pride to supercede the necessity of candidly weighing evidence, and honestly endeavoring to ascertain and state the truth? If no notice is to be taken of the testimony of such men as these, what is the use of human testimony? History may as well be written wholly from the imagination.

If these men are to be believed, then is Bishop Simpson's statement that the Free Methodist Church had its origin in an "asso-

ciation of ministers" who "privately adopted a platform, and in this organization were known as Nazarites," utterly false.

But what is to be done with the "Documents of the Nazarite Union?" Do they not assume that there was such an organization? We reply: Does not every work of fiction speak of the events which it relates as though they in reality took place? But who, on that account, quotes them as history? The only proof ever adduced, to our knowledge, (and we presume we have read all that has been written on the subject,) that such an organization ever existed, is drawn from the writings of one man, his letters and the pamphlet entitled, "Documents of the Nazarite Union of the Genesee Conference of the M. E. Church," and on the vote of the Genesee Conference, based on these documents.

The body of this pamphlet was read by the Rev. Joseph McCreery, to the Conference at its annual session at Olean in 1855. But he stated at the same time, that *he* was "the Nazarite Union," that *he alone* was responsible for the whole affair. Others, supposed to belong to it, corroborated his statement, that the whole matter was a fancy of his own creation. Joseph McCreery more than intimates this in the preface of his pamphlet. He says:

"A certain pamphlet published in New York has represented the Nazarites as a secret society devoted to the propagation of doctrinal tenets. It is enough to say that its author has been imposed upon by his zealous correspondent, both as to the fact and purpose of the Nazarites. It is only as yet a mere proposal to return to the 'old paths.'"

Notice that the author of this pamphlet states: "That it is only as yet *a mere proposal* to return to the old paths." But a proposal is not proof that the thing proposed is an accomplished fact. Other proof is needed to show that the proposal was carried out. That proof, in this case, does not exist.

Before the Genesee conference at its session at Perry, in 1858, Joseph McCreery testified:

"I wrote everything relating to the Nazarite Band. I wrote the documents. I did design an association, and prepared the documents in anticipation of such, but when we got to Conference we had enough to do of other business. We did not organize, and the question of organization has been an open question ever since. I never administered the vow to any one and I never took it myself—not formally. The association was never practically formed; I stated nearly so on the floor of the Olean Conference. I stated that the whole thing was provisional, and prospective and *I alone was responsible for the whole concern.* The preface to the pamphlet is a mythical concern altogether."

Is not this plain?

In a letter to Rev. H. Hornsby, Rev. J. McCreery explains still more fully:

"PARMA CENTRE, Nov. 11, 1855.

REV. H. HORNSBY:

The general argument is this: A number of preachers informally agreed among themselves to return as far as practicable to the discipline and customs of the church, and because of the comparative inability of one here and there doing this, they suggested the propriety of extending a general invitation to those deemed inclined in the same direction to join in the movement. This is the sum and substance of the whole concern. The only wonder in the case is that this should be considered a crime of such magnitude as to alarm the whole Conference and keep it in a stir for several days. For all the circumstantial trappings—the mystic numbers, names, and parables I am responsible. I gave them for the purpose they have answered so eloquently well. It gave an air of mystery to the matter which could not fail to attract the most intense attention in certain quarters. It was pursued only far enough to accomplish that purpose, and then relinquished. It was only a unique incident of the concern. The Lord helped at every turn, and permitted the Buffalo Regency to humbug itself most beautifully.

No one had signed the obligation. No one had adhered to the "practical propositions." The Regency did not even suspect the existence of the "Lamentations" or "Recommendations." They thought they were fighting a mere political electioneering plot, got up by plotters like themselves. Misleading themselves by the cabalistic circulars, like "Don

Quixotte of yore they attacked a windmill"—and it is thought with about the same sort of result. The whole matter was as yet only a principle proposed. It had no formal embodiment. It was a society *sans* constitution, *sans* laws, *sans* members, *sans* everything but officers and they ignorant of their official standing. In a strict legal sense it was a "*fiction.*" At this impalpable fiction the Buffalo Regency lit off the whole park of their artillery loaded to the muzzle. They fired at nothing and hit it, while the rebound of their guns kicked the whole battalion "*hors du combat.*" The report was frightening, deafening, but nobody was killed, for the very good reason that there was nobody there to be killed. The terrible "Nazarite Band" was "*non est inventus,*" and the passage of the famous compromise resolution leaves it *non est inventus* still. Hence my second of the same.

The hue and cry of "censoriousness" is but the flapping of empty sails with the wind taken out of them. No one either makes or hears it seriously. It is "gammon" by common consent. All the artillery in the world, and the Buffalo Regency to boot, can not shoot a ghost, and at the same time a ghost is more terrible out of the body than in. My judgment is that we should keep it in its present ghostly condition, without form, and void of organic properties, urging every where its principles and threatening its embodiment only in case the Buffalo Regency refuses to become defunct. Already, like Banquo's ghost, it haunts them in all their ways. They have already scared themselves into madness by gazing upon it.

The Buffalo Regency brought the war upon us. *They* made the strife. *They* cried, and roared, and bellowed. *They* disturbed the peace. *They* read intercepted private letters to cause strife. *They* read scandalous bills of information. *They* railed and ridiculed Bishop and Presiding Elder. *They* passed resolutions of insubordination, of refusal to take appointments except such as they had parceled out to themselves in advance of Conference. *They* called for pacification committees, to be frightened by sham threats of location into their service, to recommend to the Bishop a compliance to their demands. This they did causing all the strife there was. They were the doers of everything done; we were only the "*did.*" And as an evidence of our quiet and Christion spirit in the midst of all this commotion we sat serene in peaceful silence, "like Patience sitting on a monument, smiling at grief." We did not even laugh at their farcical attempts to befool the Conference and the Bishop. All we did was to sit still and let them fume and fret it out.

Our special argument is this: will a close and positive adherence to the *forms* and *customs* of Methodism engender a departure from its *doctrines?* Is it likely to encourage any other "ism" than Methodism? On the contrary is there not a special reason, founded on the prevalence, in these days, of all these vagrant "isms" for a more explicit and firm adhesion to Methodism?

So that instead of favoring fanaticism, it is our only sure defense against it,—a defense eminently demanded by the times. An emphatic and decided Methodist is of all men the least likely to fall into

any of the numerous delusions around us. It is only when men forsake the fountain of living waters that they hew out to themselves the broken cisterns of Odd-fellowism, spiritualism, and the like.

We shall go right on in the path of "Old Line Methodism," and whoever or whatever meets us in an opposite direction must either give the road, or run against us as heretofore. We shall neither seek nor shun any strife. We shall neither attack any foe, nor flee from him. We shall simply, in the name of the Lord our God, run through whatever troop, and leap over whatever wall crosses "the path our fathers trod. Amen. J. McCREERY."

At the Perry Conference the question of the existence of a "Nazarite organization" was judicially investigated. The utmost pains were taken to prove its existence. But all the proof that was brought was the "Documents" in question. But if these "Documents" are admissible as evidence, then the declaration of their author concerning them is equally admissible, and is entitled to equal weight. But this declaration, in his own language is, that "The whole concern is a fiction—prepared and ready to become a fact, when we should see fit to make it such." That time never came.

But it is said that the Olean Conference voted that there was such a society. Their vote relating to this matter is published in the minutes as follows:

"We regret that in view of such deficiencies as may exist, and with the ostensible purpose of returning to first principles, any of our members should have associated together, as we find they have done, under the name of the "Nazarite Band," or other similar appellations, with some forms of secrecy, and with the claim to be peculiar in this respect; and we pass our disapprobation upon such associations, and hereby express our full expectation that it will be abandoned by all members of this Conference."

We must confess our inability to understand this language. It looks absurd to charge that the "Nazarites" "claimed to be peculiar" in respect to having "some forms of secrecy." That men who had for years been opposing secret societies, should be charged with making such a "claim," seems extremely marvellous. They knew that there were many societies which had "forms of secresy."

It is by no means certain, supposing this to be a true copy of the record, that the record is correct. We have known instances where secretaries quite as competent as the one who made that record, have, without intending it, in copying documents upon the journal, made such mistakes as to seriously affect the meaning.

But supposing the copy and the record to be correct, suppose the Conference voted as it is here said they did, their vote that a fact existed

does not prove that it actually existed. Shall we concede infallibility to the Genesee Conference, blinded by partisan fury, when we deny it to the Pope and his General Council, acting in a dispassionate manner? The vote does not even prove that the Conference *believed* that what they voted was true. It simply proves that they had power to pass such a vote, and did pass it. This same Genesee Conference at its session at LeRoy in 1857, voted as a fact what every man voting KNEW *was not a fact.* They did so on my trial. With my printed article before them, they voted that I said in that article, *what they knew I did not say.* I called their attention to it, and made it so plain that the dullest could not fail to see it.

That a vote of a Conference that a fact exists is no proof of its existence, is shown by the records of a far more respectable body of the M. E. Church than the Genesee Conference.

The Journal of the General Conference held at Philadelphia, May, 1864, has the following record:

"The long contest on the subject of slavery seems drawing to a close, and no doubtful tokens indicate the will of God, and point unerringly to the destruction of a system so inhuman.

We rejoice that we have, from the beginning been foremost among American Churches in the contest against slavery."

The men who voted this self-congratulation were elected from the various Conferences to represent the piety and the wisdom of the Church. They were men above the average of Methodist preachers.

These men must have known that there were upon the Journal of the General Conference, having the force of law, resolutions passed only twenty-eight years before, which plainly contradict the above claim to "have from the beginning been foremost among American Churches in the contest against slavery."

We doubt whether any respectable body ever gave a greater insult to a reading people.

We copy from the Journal of the General Conference of the M. E. Church for 1836 :

"Resolved by the delegates of the Annual Conferences in General Conference assembled:

1. That they disapprove, in the most unqualified sense, the conduct of two members of the General Conference who are reported to have lectured in this city recently upon, and in favor of modern Abolitionism.

Resolved, 2. That they are decidedly opposed to modern Abolitionism, and wholly disclaim any right, wish, or intention to interfere in the civil and political relation between master and slave as it exists in the slave-holding States of this Union.

Resolved, That the committee appointed to draft a pastoral letter to our preachers be, and they are hereby instructed to take notice of the subject of

modern Abolition that has so seriously agitated the different parts of our country, and that they let our preachers, members, and friends know that the General Conference are opposed to the agitation of that subject, and will use all prudent means to put it down."

Can you, after reading the action of these two General Conferences of the M. E. Church, believe that the vote of a Methodist Episcopal Conference proves anything more than that they passed it?

Are you not then convinced that the assertion of Bishop Simpson, that the Free Methodist movement "originated in an association of ministers, who privately adopted a platform, and in this organization were known as Nazarites," is utterly false? Can you possibly come to any other conclusion? Ought not the Bishop to have given these facts some candid attention, before he admitted into his book, a statement so foundationless and false?

His fundamental assertion being proved false, it follows that all those dependent upon it are equally false.

If there was no organization, then it could have had no name, no platform, and no publications.

CHAPTER III.

THE FACTS IN THE CASE.

Methodism in this country, was at that time in what Dr. Stevens, then editor of the *Christian Advocate and Journal*, called "its transition state." It still retained much of the vital religion, fervor, simplicity and plainness, which at the first, constituted its only apology for an existence as a distinct denomination. Generally, in going into their houses of worship, in time of service, one could tell at a glance that it was a Methodist congregation.

But a change had already commenced. It was accelerated when the census of the United States disclosed the fact that the M. E. Church was the largest, Protestant denomination in this country, and had the greatest amount of church property. This gratifying intelligence was often dwelt upon in the church periodicals, and in addresses at Conferences, and at other large gatherings. The effect was soon visible. The Discipline still read, in answer to the question:

"Is any thing advisable in regard to building churches?"

"Let all our churches be built plain and decent,

and with free seats; but not more expensive than is absolutely unavoidable; otherwise the necessity of raising money will make rich men necessary to us. But if so, we must be dependent on them, yea, and governed by them. And then, farewell to Methodist discipline if not doctrine too."

The directions concerning dress were positive.

"Question: Should we insist on the rules concerning dress?

Answer. By all means. This is no time to give encouragement to superfluity of apparel. Therefore, receive none into the Church till they have left off superfluous ornaments." "In visiting the classes be very mild, but very strict." "Allow of no exempt case: better one suffer than many."

So reads the Discipline of 1846. But conformity to the world increased rapidly in these respects. Still there were many, both among the ministers and the members, who did not take readily to the new order of things that was being introduced. The Bible stood in their way. They had been taught that it meant what it said; and if it did, and their rules were, as they believed, in accordance with it, they thought their rules should be enforced, and not repealed. They had not learned to explain away the plain precepts of the Word of God. These, too, held to the doctrine of holiness as taught by Wesley—that entire sanctification was to be sought by faith, subse-

quently to pardon. Others opposed making holiness a distinct issue, and were content with preaching it only in a general way, and carried the idea that it was to be obtained gradually. One old preacher said he had been seeking holiness twenty years, and when questioned closely, admitted he was no nearer it, as he could see, than when he began.

At this period slavery was the all-absorbing question in the M. E. Church, as in the nation. The M. E. Church had been divided on the slavery issue, but it was on the question of the right of ministers to hold slaves. The right of members to hold slaves was granted. There was then, on the slavery question as there is now in some Conferences on the tobacco question, one standard of morality for the preachers and another for the laymen. Up to the day that slavery was abolished by the sword, there were thousands of slave-holders in good standing in the M. E. Church. The M. E. Discipline tolerated slavery to the last.

But many of the preachers and members at the North were zealously and honestly engaged in the effort to banish, by proper enactments, all slave holding from the M. E. Church. In the Genesee Conference, as elsewhere, there were two classes—one decidedly, and at all times, openly and avowedly opposed

to slavery; others claimed to be opposed to slavery but objected to the measures proposed to get rid of it. Those in the Genesee Conference who were asking for "the old paths" were abolitionists of the most pronounced type.

The Rev. F. G. Hibbard had, by the pro-slavery men of the General Conference been elected editor of the Northern Christian Advocate over the old editor, Rev. William Hosmer, who was very emphatically the choice of the patronizing Conferences. The anti-slavery men of these Conferences would not tamely submit to this usurpation of the slave power. So they started the *Northern Independent*, and made Hosmer editor. This paper had a wide circulation and a powerful influence. In intellect and courage, Hosmer was the John Knox of his day. His anti-slaveryism was not of that sentimental kind which opposed slavery at the South and defended tyranny at home. With true nobility of soul he hated injustice and oppression every where, and condemned them just as strongly when found in the North as in the South, in his own church as in the world. He not only opened his columns for those whom the dominant party of the Genesee Conference proscribed, but spoke out editorially in vigorous condemnation of

the oppressive acts of the majority of the Conference.

About this time began the revival of Masonry in this country. In the excitement which followed the adbuction and murder of Morgan, the lodges had generally disbanded. But Odd Fellowship had paved the way for their re-organization. In the Genesee Conference several of the leading preachers became connected with one or both of these secret societies. Collisions had taken place between these preachers and some of the older and more conscientious members of the churches which they were appointed to serve. Men of God, in whose minds the remembrance of the Morgan tragedy was fresh, felt that they could not, in conscience, support preachers who took upon them oaths which required them to commit similar crimes should occasion demand it. Such men were often put out of the church. But this action brought about dissatisfaction and division.

In this view of the case we are confirmed by the Rev. C. D. Burlingham, who, in a pamphlet which he wrote and published in 1860 entitled "An Outline History of the Genesee Conference Difficulties," said:

"Some sixteen or eighteen years since a disturbing, element was introduced into the Genesee Conference.

Our church, as well as the community in general, had for a number of years been much agitated by the *Masonic question*, and the anti-Masonic excitement consequent upon the abduction and murder of William Morgan, of Batavia, in 1826. As the tumultuous waves were gradually subsiding into a calm, this new element of discord began to introduce itself in our church, professedly as a mutual insurance company against temporal want, and a newly discovered and remarkably successful Gospel appliance for bringing the *world, reformed and saved, into the church.* But our people very naturally looked upon it with suspicion, dreading its power as a *secret agency* acting through *affiliated societies*, and doubting its utility as a financial scheme, they feared that it would *drag the church—debased and corrupted—into the world.*

Under the influence of its friends in the Conference—several active and aspiring young men—*Odd Fellowship* became a fixture in the Conference; not however as a formal organization among the "Fellow" preachers, probably not, but *virtually* such; as the "Fellows" were members of the "Order" they were a *unit* in policy, and prepared to act as an associated body in Conference and elsewhere."

The preachers who belonged to these secret societies, and the time-serving and the timid naturally came together.

There were many in the Conference who resisted strongly the encroachments which the world was thus making upon the church, and sought to check the growing tendency to

worldly conformity. They had joined the Methodist Church because they honestly believed its doctrines ; and, considering their ordination vows as binding upon them, they faithfully endeavored to bring themselves and their members, both in experience and life, to the Discipline which they had promised to enforce. These men, calm, trustful, and ignorant of the tactics of the lodge, received their appointment, as from the Lord, not knowing that there was a power at work, secretly, to fill the chief places of the Conference with those who, at least were not opposed to the workings of the lodge.

There is nothing that brings heart to heart like a similarity of religious experiences, especially when suffering persecution for Christ's sake.

Thus there was an issue in the Conference which gradually became more and more clearly defined, on Scriptural holiness, slavery, and secret societies.

Matters were brought to a crisis, and the two parties took shape and form at the Buffalo Conference held in 1848. This was the session at which I joined the Conference on probation. At one of its sittings, Rev. Eleazer Thomas gave to each preacher in his seat, a copy of a pamphlet written by Rev. C. D. Burlingham

showing the infidel character of Masonry and Odd Fellowship.

With prophetic foresight the author pointed out the evils that would result from preachers uniting with these societies.

"It is believed that the *direct tendency* of Odd Fellowism is the formation of parties in the *Conference*, in the *Church*, and in *Civil Society*; parties injurious to the cause of God and dangerous to the State. As all the operations and movements of the order are arranged in secret conclave, all persons, except the initiated, are supposed to be ignorant of its nightly transactions. It must be well known, that a *small party*, acting in perfect *concert* and in *secret*, bound together by strong *partisan* feeling, and under the influence of an obligation imposed upon its members, deemed by them as *sacred*, perhaps as an oath, is able to control, in almost any given case, a *multitude* of unsuspecting men, who are not under the influence of such affinities. And may we not justly fear, when a score or two of the members of our Conference, embracing the various *intellectual* grades in the Ministry, shall combine under such influences as above named, that a *favoritism* (if nothing more) will be practiced, *on account of attachment to the Order*, which will create envyings and jealousies in the Ministry, and very much injure all the interests in the church?"

The wildest excitement followed the distribution of this pamphlet. The adherents of the lodge insisted that Messrs. Burlingham and Thomas had charged them with being in-

fidels. Thomas Carlton said, with great emphasis, that if he was "compelled to leave either, he would leave the Church before he would the lodge." After a while matters quieted down and compromise measures were adopted. They were to the effect, that neither party should do anything calculated to keep up the agitation. This was construed by the secret society men to mean that they might still continue in the lodge, and get all the others to join that they could; and the others must say nothing against it, as that would tend to keep up the agitation. Their opposers construed it to mean that those who were in the lodge must get out as soon and as quickly as they could, and no others must join.

The breach thus begun was never healed. The secret society men were busy recruiting their forces, both in the ministry and in the membership. They used every inducement to persuade the young preachers to join, giving them to understand that their position in the Conference would depend upon the party with which they affiliated. As fast as they could, they took the Church into the lodge, and the lodge into the Church. In a few years the power of the lodge was exercised to control the affairs of the Church.

Rev. J. B. Alverson, one of the old, influ-

ential preachers, endeavored to dissuade Thomas Carlton from running for Book Agent, on the ground that he could not be elected; Carlton replied: "I can command sufficient secret society influence in the General Conference to secure my election."

The event showed that he had not misjudged. He was elected—re-elected, and became a wealthy man.

Those opposed to this union of the Church and the world, went out to promote, as best they could, the life and power of religion. They endeavored to enforce the Discipline,—and they preached plainly and clearly the doctrine of holiness.

Prominent among these were Asa Abell, Eleazer Thomas, and William C. Kendall. Asa Abell made a distinct profession of the blessing of entire sanctification at the Byron Camp-Meeting, in 1851. He preached it on his district, and secured at different times, the services of Fay H. Purdy, then in his early prime, a lawyer, who had received a mighty baptism of the Spirit, and whose efforts for the awakening of formal churches met with remarkable success. Deep and powerful revivals broke out in Parma, Kendall, and other places, and the district generally was in a prosperous, spiritual condition.

Rev. Eleazer Thomas kept the Cattaraugus district, to which he was appointed, in a flame of revival. He said that, like Asbury, he felt divinely commissioned to preach holiness in every sermon. At a camp-meeting which he held in Collins, Erie Co., N. Y., at which Dr. and Mrs. Palmer were present, we received the blessing of holiness: and from that time our troubles in the Conference commenced. Brother Thomas introduced at each of his Quarterly Conferences and secured the passage of resolutions against choir singing and instrumental music in worship. His camp-meetings were seasons of great power. The lines were as closely drawn, and the truth as plainly preached as now among the Free Methodists.

Rev. William C. Kendall had extensive and powerful revivals on his charges; and, under his labors, many came out in the enjoyment and the profession of the blessing of holiness. Other preachers—especially on the districts named, entered heartily into the work of soul-saving, and there was a steady increase, both in the number of members and their spirituality, in many of the charges.

Meanwhile, the secret society men and their adherents were busy, seeking to build up the church in external splendor. They read fine sermons—sometimes without being particular

as to the source where they were obtained.

"Was not that an eloquent sermon which our preacher delivered yesterday?" said one of the stewards to John A, Latta, one Monday morning.

"Perhaps you enjoyed it so much you would like to hear it again," replied Mr. Latta. He then took down a book and read him the identical sermon, word for word.

Thus matters went on without any open collision for several years. But it was clearly apparent that the salvation party was making headway the faster. They had also this advantage: while, generally, appointments which men of the secret society party had filled for several years welcomed a change, those appointments which the salvation preachers had filled, would, with the utmost reluctance, receive one of the other party. Thus the secret society men felt that important appointments in the Conference were being gradually closed against them. Something must be done or they would be left in a hopeless, powerless minority.

Under a specious pretext, Rev. Eleazer Thomas, the acknowledged leader of the salvation party, was sent to California, and, as is well known, was afterwards killed by the Modocs. The venerable Dr. Samuel Luckey was appointed to the Genesee district. Though

great efforts had been made to stigmatize the work as fanatical, this veteran preacher recognized it at once as the work of God; and with all his great ability helped it on. The Bergen Camp Meetings had become famous for their remarkable manifestations of saving power. The religious interest did not decline under his administration. He encouraged what was called the fanaticism of the district, and was not reappointed Presiding Elder. He was succeeded by the Rev. Loren Stiles. Mr. Stiles was a young man, a graduate of the Methodist Theological Seminary at Concord, N. H. He had already become celebrated in Western New York as a pulpit orator. Amiable in his disposition, pleasing in his manners, and a thorough gentleman in all his bearing, it was taken for granted that he would instinctively recoil from what was branded as the "coarse fanaticism" prevalent in the district. It was supposed that he would win the hearts of the people, and gradually turn them, without friction, back to the respectable quiet of spiritual death. But never were men more grievously disappointed. His prejudices were based solely upon the reports which he had heard and read. Thoroughly sincere, he recognized as soon as he came on the district the marks of the work of God. He saw that many had a

spiritual power which he, as yet had never received. He sought it at once; and he who was sent to put down the work of holiness, helped it on with all the influence he possessed. His Quarterly Meetings were thronged, and many of the people consecrated themselves wholly to God.

On the Niagara district a similar disappointment was experienced. The Rev. Isaac C. Kingsley, the Presiding Elder, was a graduate of an Ohio college. He had been brought up a Presbyterian, and still retained many of his Presbyterian ways. He sometimes read his sermons, and was rather stiff in his manners, and precise in his way of doing things. He was intellectually a strong man, examined things for himself, and when he came to a conclusion had the honesty and the courage to avow it, though he might differ from others. After a careful survey of the work he decided that what was branded as "fanaticism," was only the vital godliness which he had expected to find when he joined the Methodist church. So, instead of opposing it he gave it his cordial support.

The Rev. Charles D. Burlingham was pushing on the work of God on the Olean District with a hearty zeal and abundant success. The interest on the subject of holiness was

kept up, and the Quarterly meetings were lively and interesting.

The secret society men, stirred up by this state of things, began to publish unfavorable criticisms upon those prominent in the holiness movement, and to throw out insinuations against them. Their accredited organ was the *Buffalo Advocate*.

One of the first direct attacks made by the *Buffalo Advocate* was in an editorial reflecting upon Ex-Bishop Hamline. It was as follows:

"An article is going the rounds of the papers which states that Bishop Hamline has donated $25,000 to a Western College. We don't believe a word of it. He who was once Bishop, is, if we are correctly informed, as snug and keen in the management of his finances as any other property-famed man. He may have given something nevertheless."—*The Advocate*, April 12th, 1855.

After several efforts from the friends of the Bishop to have the above corrected, the editor finally admitted he stood corrected, that the Bishop had given the above sum, and added the sneer:

"Noble man! he shall have all our praise, if it will do him any good."

Other articles reflecting still more severely upon the Bishop were published from time to time in *The Advocate*. Why all this?

Bishop Hamline was eminent for the advocacy of the doctrine of holiness.

The first public declaration that there was a "Nazarite Association" was made in an editorial in the *Buffalo Advocate*, of July 19th, 1855, in the following language:

"We have learned from a reliable source, and have had sufficient evidence placed in our hands to prove that there exists, among the ministers of a certain Protestant sect of Western New York, a secret, religious organization, where one would be least suspected. The purpose of this Jesuitical order we will not at this time attempt to explain; but the consequences of it, unless its progress shall be arrested, and its existence blotted out, it takes no prophet's eye to foresee,—incurable, ministerial factions and ruined churches must otherwise be the inevitable result. This order has been designated by various appellations; but the authorized cognomen is, 'THE NAZARITE BAND.' It is to be hoped that those who have assumed this solemn and suggestive title have weighed well what they are doing, and what the solemn imposition of the name upon themselves implies. To us it appears like impious mockery, and if "any good can come out of THIS Nazareth," then can a clean thing thing come forth from an unclean. We know well the men who are the originators of this singular movement, and have been watching their down-sittings and up-risings for a long time. Our editorial, secret drawer contains the secret of many curious facts relating to the ministerial career of some of these eminent and most notable characters.

We learn that the society is constituted by three degrees or "divisions." Into the third or highest, are admitted only the leading spirits of the order, or those whom it is supposed will heartily favor the purpose of the order. The first degree, it would appear, is so indefinitely constituted, that one may get into it, and not be himself aware of the fact. It is only required of the candidate that he express his approbation of certain men and measures, and forsooth he straightway becomes a Nazarite, and that before he knows it. He is, after this, carefully approached, and his opinions drawn out with respect to certain other measures, and if he can be "trusted," is advanced! There are many considerations which give this new organization a novel, not to say ludicrous aspect. One is, that its originators have heretofore made themselves somewhat notorious, by their blazing hostility to secret societies. They have published and spoken great and hard things. They have for years been bent on giving both lay and clerical Odd Fellows and Masons "particular jesse." Indeed, it is a main purpose of this Nazarite Band to oppose the influence which, it is alleged, secular, secret societies are seeking to exert in religious affairs. Another beautiful feature of this new order is the peculiarly lovely, personal and religious characteristics of those by whom it was conceived and brought forth. Their character is a strange compound of sanctity and slander, of pompous humility and humble pride, of peccability and perfection. Their preaching of the Gospel of peace is always attended or followed by jealousies, heart-burnings, and fanatical dissensions. Peevish and fretful tyrants at home, they have a

very ardent charity for the "dear sisters" abroad, some of whom "they lead about." Without any remarkable "sanctity of manners undefiled," their professions reach to heaven, and clothe them with the most spotless garment of assumed purity. As a specimen of this class, we would refer the reader to a certain individual living in Orleans County, called, according to the Nazarite nomenclature, BANI, who is, we are informed, the high priest of this new profession."

Such was the accusation. But the "sufficient evidence" was never given. It appears from the next week's issue of *The Advocate*, that a prompt denial was made, by the only person competent to make either a denial, or a confirmation of the charge. He had, of his own accord, written the letters to which we have referred, and he manfully came forward and took the responsibility for what he alone had written.

How was his denial treated? Another extract from the same paper will show.

"We learn that 'Bani' denies that the NAZARITES are an organized band, as we asserted them to be in our last week's issue. We would remind this very conscientious and notable individual of the importance of keeping truth on his side, as far as circumstances will permit; and not by gratuitous and voluntary denials of facts, place himself in a very embarrassing position, and one in which honest men seldom find themselves. Bani, it is not right, it is

decidedly wrong to make statements which you know to be false, and you must not do so any more."

These extracts are favorable specimens of the articles which appeared in that paper from time to time. Compare them in tone and spirit with the one which we wrote entitled "New School Methodism," and then remember that the editor who wrote the above extracts was afterwards admitted to the Conference and made Presiding Elder, while we were visited, for writing that article, with the heaviest anathemas of the church!

This then is all there ever was to the "Nazarite Union."

Rev. Joseph McCreery wrote several letters to different preachers, proposing that they work in harmony in their efforts to persuade the people to return to the old paths of Methodism. There, in all probability, the matter would have rested; but some of these letters were shown to the editor of the *Buffalo Advocate*, who made the most of them, and stirred up some excitement. Anticipating that the subject would be brought up at Conference, the Rev. J. McCreery prepared a statement of the whole affair, including copies of the letters he had written. This he read to the Conference at Olean in 1855. This "Document" or "Roll," as it was called, was greatly misrepre-

sented. To correct these misrepresentations it was published by Rev. Wm. C. Kendall. This is all there was to this affair as far as the preachers belonging to the Conference were concerned. After the FREE METHODIST CHURCH was organized, some who opposed its organization, held meetings by themselves, and called themselves "Nazarites." Some of these still retained their membership in the M. E. Church, and some did not; but all arrayed themselves against the FREE METHODIST CHURCH.

They have always been its unrelenting opponents. They insist that a great mistake was made in leaving the M. E. Church, or in not, when thrust out, uniting with it again, and keeping up the agitation within its pale.

CHAPTER IV.

SECRET MEETINGS.

In any deliberative assembly, a minority composed of men of average intelligence, bound together by secret oaths, unknown to the rest, can generally carry their measures. Scattered about, their *concerted* action appears to be spontaneous; and so they often secure a favorable decision before their opponents have time to rally. In this way the Jacobin Club gained control of the National Assembly, or Legislature of France. In this way the secret society men of the Genesee Conference obtained the controlling influence.

At several sessions of the Conference, they held meetings so secret that their existence was not even suspected for some years. *They actually did what they falsely charged upon the others.* We have proved that the "Nazarite Union" was a fiction. We shall show that those who assumed its existence, held secret meetings and adopted measures to crush those who could not in conscience fall in with their worldly policy. When this was accomplished, they assigned as their excuse, that their victims had formed "The Nazarite Union, having

some marks of secresy." Was there ever an inconsistency more glaring?

The knowledge that they had secret meetings came into our hands providentially. A friend gave us the original minutes of one of their meetings. They read as follows:

"LE ROY, SEPT. 3, 1857.

Meeting convened according to adjournment; Brother Parsons in the chair. Prayer, by Brother Fuller. Brethren present pledged themselves by rising, to keep to themselves the proceedings of this meeting.

Resolved, That we will not allow the character of Rev. B. T. Roberts to pass until he has had a fair trial. Passed. Moved, That we will not pass the character of Rev. W. C. Kendall, until he has had a fair trial. Passed.

Moved, That Brother Carlton be added to the committee on Brother Kendall's case. Passed."

We shall refer to this remarkable document again, but for the present will only say:

1. That it was read to Conference; and repeatedly published, and its genuineness was never questioned.

2. That it proves that they not only held secret meetings, but had an organization with the usual officers, chairman, secretary and committees.

3. That it not only held its meetings in

secret, but that it was pledged to keep its proceedings secret.

4. That it was engaged in the most infamous business of plotting against the reputation and ministerial standing of some of their brethren.

The clue thus obtained was followed up. Several of the men who attended these secret meetings, were called upon to testify in my trial, concerning them. Some reluctantly gave important testimony; others answered by evasions. From these reluctant witnesses it was ascertained that they had a secret organization as far back as the Medina Conference, in 1856—and how much farther was not ascertained.

Rev. Sanford Hunt testified:

"I was present at meetings at the house of John Ryan. I think there was a chairman and secretary at that meeting; we had about three meetings; there were generally twenty or thirty at the meeting."

At the LeRoy Conference, the number who were brought into the conspiracy was increased.

Rev. Thomas Carlton testified:

"I attended three of the meetings at the house of John Ryan during the session of the Medina Conference. I attended some of the select meetings at Le Roy; not all. I should think there might have been sixty at one of the meetings, at another, about forty; they ranged from thirty to sixty."

Rev. D. F. Parsons testified:

"I was chairman of these meetings held at Le Roy. There was a person who kept brief minutes of the meetings."

If Bishop Simpson will not believe the seventeen men who testified that there never had been in the Genesee Conference, a "Nazarite organization," will he believe these three men who testified that they attended, from time to time, secret, organized meetings? They are men to whom he lent a willing ear. If the Free Methodist Church originated "in an association of ministers," then this must have been the association. For in this association originated the proscriptions and persecutions that rendered its formation necessary.

That this association was remarkably secret is evidenced by the fact that it had been holding meetings for two years at least, before its existence was suspected. It was remarked that about thirty men voted solid on all issues touching old or new fashioned Methodism, but this was supposed to be owing to natural affinities and to the influence of the lodge. Those against whom they were plotting, were not wanting in ordinary sagacity; they were on the lookout; yet the meetings held at two successive Conferences were so carefully concealed, that not a whisper was heard concerning them.

The first action of this association which has come to our knowledge was a successful effort to secure the removal of Revs. L. Stiles and I. C. Kingsley from the office of Presiding Elders. They were both popular upon their districts and the work of God prospered under their care. But they were not in sympathy with the secret society men who now aimed to gain entire control of the Conference. Therefore it was secretly decided that they must be removed. About thirty of the preachers signed a petition to the Bishop asking for their removal. The Bishop was told that unless they were removed, these thirty men would not take work. This was proved by the testimony of some of the number. At the Le Roy Conference, the following testimony on this point was given.

Rev. Wm. Barrett called:

"I saw at the Medina Conference a petition asking for the removal of Brothers Stiles and Kingsley from the office of Presiding Elders. I can not state the wording of the petition, but understood it to be this: that we would refuse to take work if Brothers Stiles and Kingsley were continued in the Presiding Elders' office."

Rev. J. M. Fuller called:

Ques. Did you state at the Medina Conference that you would not take work under either Stiles or Kingsley?

Ans. "I did."

Ques. Did you hear any one else say the same?

Ans. "I heard others say what would amount to about the same."

Were there this amount of testimony that a "Nazarite organization" ever existed, and that it sought to control appointments, it would be regarded as a complete vindication of the extreme measures of the Conference. But is there any justice, anything partaking of the common fairness which we have a right to look for between man and man, leaving Christianity entirely out of the account, for one class of men to turn others out of the church, under the *false* pretext that they had done what they were themselves habitually doing? If so, then it would be right for men who live by making counterfeit money to send honest men to prison under the false accusation of passing counterfeit money.

Their next step was to keep out of the Conference pious young men offering to join who would not, as they supposed, place themselves under their guidance and control. Several young men of good abilities, education, and of deep piety, who professed and preached holiness, were compelled to go to other Conferences. In reference to this action the *Buffalo Advocate* said of the Conference.

"Hot-heads and fanatics, from any quarter, will find it hereafter difficult soil on which to produce any of their mischief or scandal. Some attempted to gain admittance to the Conference at its last session, but were repulsed at the threshhold, and passed away, disgusted with the forebodings of order and manliness, which a kind Providence permits shall govern hereafter. These, with their sympathizers in and out of the body, are the agencies employed in writing scandal of those who now hold the reins, and who mean to live and govern for God and holiness—and respectable position."

But the worst use that was made of this organization was to shield the guilty and punish the innocent. Charges backed up by the most responsible parties, made against some of its members for dishonest transactions amounting almost to States Prison offences, were summarily dismissed; while men of spotless lives, accused of being Nazarites, were turned out of the church under pretexts so slight as to admit of no defence.

One of the first victims selected was WILLIAM C. KENDALL. He was one of the most godly, laborious, and successful ministers in Western New York, and was the most persecuted. Charges against him were prepared at the last session of the Conference, which he attended; but he was told that they were not prosecuted for want of time, but would be

next year. But he died too soon for that. He was removed from the impending evil. His case reminds us of the devout Rutherford, whom he so much resembled in spirit. Rutherford was summoned to answer at the next Parliament on a charge of high treason. The summons found him on his death-bed. On hearing of it, he calmly remarked that he had got another summons before a superior judge and judicatory, and sent the message, "I behoove to answer my first summons; and ere your day arrives, I will be where few Kings and great folks come."

William C. Kendall was of an old, highly respectable, Methodist family in Wyoming Co., N. Y. He was our class-mate in academy, college and Conference, and a brother beloved. While in college he experienced the blessing of holiness. He kept the flame of perfect love alive, by laboring to bring others into the same blessed state. He graduated in the summer of 1848, and soon after joined the Genesee Conference on probation. God had given him every qualification to labor successfully in his vineyard. He had a fine, manly form of noble bearing; a frank, open countenance on which rested a sweet, heavenly smile; a pleasant voice of unusual compass and power, perfectly at his command; a mind carefully stored with

divine truth as well as with classic lore—and above all a heart fully sanctified to God.

A remark made by Bishop Hamline left a lasting impression upon his mind. The Bishop hearing that some preachers were accused of making holiness their hobby, said: "Woe to that Methodist preacher, that son of perdition, who does not make holiness his hobby."

Brother Kendall went to his first circuit, Cambria, Niagara Co., N.Y., resolved to make "holiness his hobby." During his two years there, many were converted and many were sanctified to God. At Royalton, in 1850, he had a good work; and at Pike, the next year, one hundred were converted and added to the church under his labors. Here, as elsewhere, he strongly insisted on both inward and outward holiness, *entire sanctification*, while he endeavored to keep the standard of justification where God's word has placed it.

The results were, clear and strong conversions, and converts pressing into the enjoyment of entire holiness. These were strong to labor, and of course were active in the meetings. This excited the jealousy of some who had been longer in the Church, but had failed to go forward in their experience. A committee was appointed to request the preacher not to preach so much on holiness, "lest he should

drive away men of influence *needed to the Church.*" Foremost among those who were afraid of holiness, lest it should divide the church, was a leading member, who had long been prominent in the community. It was afterwards proved that for ten years, including this period, this man had been forging indorsements to bank-notes! These he paid on maturity; but at last being sick when a note became due, his crime was discovered, and he punished. Chiefly through the influence of this man, Brother Kendall was removed at the close of the year. On the Covington Circuit, to which he was sent, multitudes were saved.

In September, 1854, he was sent to Albion. His predecessor warned him against preaching here as he had done elsewhere, on the subject of dress. But he was very kind, yet very firm, and did not "shun to declare the whole counsel of God." Notwithstanding the most violent opposition of several of his official board, he had one of the most powerful and extensive revivals the place has ever known. Hundreds were converted and sanctified, and over a hundred added to the church.

The next year he was sent to Brockport, where the opposition became still more intense and assumed a more organized form. Many were saved. But they were branded as fana-

tics, and a pamphlet was written by a former travelling preacher, against the work, and extensively circulated.

In a letter written at this time, Brother Kendall says: "In the afternoon we had our official meeting, at the close of which two hours were devoted to my case. The council of course were divided—we have *some* brethren who are firm on the side of religion. I did, myself, little more than deny untrue assertions. We adjourned without final action on my case. Next Monday evening is our regular meeting again. What will befall me then, I know not." He was accustomed to say in his preaching, 'I stand on the Bible and the Methodist Discipline; when I get outside of them, then lay hands on me."

When the appointments were read out at the Medina Conference, at the close of this year, and it was seen that Brothers Stiles and Kingsley were removed from being presiding elders, and were transferred to another Conference; and it was evident that the party known as "The Buffalo Regency," had every thing their own way, the hearts of most of those who were in favor of old fashioned Methodism sank within them in discouragement. But not so with William C. Kendall. He saw things as the rest saw them. In addition to the generally

bad state of affairs, he had been again removed at the end of his first year, and sent to a far less important appointment. But when, in closing the Conference, the Bishop called on some one to sing, Brother Kendall arose, and in clear, triumphant notes called out:

"Come on my partners in distress."

At the close of the first verse, some acted as if they wished to kneel, and so close the singing. But he struck in joyously:

"Who suffer with our Master here,
We shall before his face appear,
And by his side sit down."

One to have looked on would have supposed from the appearance, that the vanquished were victors. By the time the singing was finished we were all ready to go to the ends of the earth, if need be, to proclaim a free and full salvation.

At Chili, to which he was sent, the opposition was still more determined. Yet many were converted, reclaimed and sanctified.

Speaking of one point on his charge, where some were seeking religion, he says: "Last evening I requested that none come to the altar who were unwilling to pray for themselves. Some who had been as seekers, staid away. Far better than that they should be bolstered up with false hopes—Lord give us a

thorough Christianity ! Save us from spurious revivals."

At the next session of the Conference two bills of charges were presented to him, which were, as was alleged, laid over till next year, for want of time.

From the LeRoy Conference he was sent to West Falls Circuit. It was considered one of the poorest in the Conference. The presiding elder told him that "If he pleased the people pretty well, they might board him and his wife around, from house to house, but they would not be able to support him if he kept house." The people had been told by their presiding elder prior to Conference, that he "doubted whether there was a man in the Conference small enough for them."

To this circuit Wm. C. Kendall, a man capable of filling with credit any Christian pulpit, was sent. When he brushed away the last tear at Conference, he smiled, and said triumphantly "I will trust in God to make them repent they ever sent me to West Falls to cure or punish me." He found things were worse than was represented. There was but little of even the form of godliness. But he went to work, with resolute courage and a strong faith, to promote a revival of religion. His labors were helped beyond all expectation. One of

the first who contributed to his support was an old friend Quaker, who, at the close of one of his searching sermons, stepped up and placed a bank-bill in his hand saying, "William, I perceive that God is with thee."

A revival broke out that swept with almost resistless power all through that region. With untiring zeal, he went from house to house and prayed with the people. Whole families were converted. Stout hearted infidels fell prostrate under the power of God, and were glad to have those pray for them whom once they had hated. It was said that for eight miles along the main road there was not a house but that some of its inmates had been converted in this revival. In the village when he entered it there were but three houses that had family prayer—when he left it there were but three in which they did not have family prayer.

But at last, his incessant labors, and the unceasing persecution to which he was subjected, and which originated with his brethren in the ministry, told upon his nervous system, and his strong constitution gave way.

On Saturday, the 16th of January, 1858, he was threatened with symptoms of the typhoid fever. Yet, the following day, as there was no one to fill his appointment, he rode eight miles to it, preached twice with great power,

returned home and went to bed, to die. He gradually grew worse, but was conscious and happy. He would often sing his favorite hymns:

"How happy every child of grace
Who knows his sins forgiven."

And

"My soul's full of glory,
Inspiring my tongue."

One morning on waking he said, "I have seen the King of Glory, and slept in his palace. I was so intimate with the angels!"

Not a murmur once escaped his lips, in the most severe paroxysms of pain. Sabbath morning, the 31st of January, he was thought to be dying, and his room was filled with a weeping multitude. His voice failed, and he lay gazing into heaven, all entranced with its glories that were beaming down upon him. He was waving his hands in triumph. His wife bent her ear to his lips and heard him whisper, Hail! hail! all hail!!

After a short silence, he suddenly roused and sung:

"We'll praise him again
When we pass over Jordan."

His father asked: "William, is all well?" With a look of unspeakable joy he answered three times, "All is well."

Gradually the silver cord was unloosed, and

on Monday morning, Feb. 1, 1858, at half-past ten o'clock, this Christian warrior, who had ever been valiant for the truth, laid aside his armor to wear his crown. But he was victorious in death, as in life.

After his death, those who had been his violent persecutors seemed to vie with each other to do honor to his memory. It has always been so with formal, persecuting churches. It was so in our Saviour's day.

Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous and say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.—Matt. xxiii, 29–30.

The Genesee Conference, at its next session, instead of trying and expelling him, adopted the following tribute to his memory:

"He fell at his post, in the midst of one of the most promising revivals that had ever attended his labors. It was remarked by his presiding elder, Rev. G. Fillmore, that notwithstanding all his previous ministerial success, he had never known a time when there was such a prospect before him of extensive usefulness as when he was taken sick; and he had never known an instance where a preacher had so

interwoven himself into the affections of all the people.

It may be said of Brother Kendall, that he fell a martyr to his work. The day after he was taken sick, he went to an appointment, and preached with much earnestness and power; and when his wife endeavored to dissuade him from going to another, his Christian reply was, "I want to say something to the people at Potter's Corners, which they will always remember." He made the effort, but was soon obliged to stop. This was his last effort. He was taken home, and never after left his house till he was conveyed from it to his resting place in the grave.

His end was such as a life like his can not fail to insure. It was not only peaceful, but triumphant. A short time before he died, he said, "I have been swimming in the waters of death for two days, and they are like sweet incense all over me." Sometimes he would wave his hands in ecstacy, saying, "Why, heaven is coming down to earth! This is heaven! I see the angels! They are flying all through the house." He often sang his favorite hymns, suggestive of the bliss of heaven.

Just before his departing, his afflicted companion held her ear to catch the accents of

what he seemed to be uttering in a whisper, and distinctly heard him breathe out, as from his inmost soul, "Hail! Hail! All hail! I see light, light!" *I see* was uttered with emphasis. One asked, "Is all well?" He sweetly replied, and repeated it three times, "All is well!" He suffered a brief conflict with the powers of darkness, but soon obtained the victory, and exclaimed, "Jesus the conqueror reigns!" Thus lived and died our beloved brother, William C. Kendall, a man honored of God, and greatly beloved by all who knew him."

Well may the Conference place upon its Records that "HE FELL A MARTYR TO HIS WORK." Would it not be well for the surviving participants in the proscription which sent him upon a large, hard circuit, and who followed him with their calumnies until his sensitive nature could bear no more, to ask who is responsible for his martyrdom? He belonged to a long-lived family, had a vigorous constitution, and was capable of doing an amount of work which but few men could perform. To all human appearance he should have lived and labored for years.

We close our chapter with the following extract from a letter written to us by Rev. Seymour Coleman, now gone to glory—then a venerable preacher of the Troy Conference:

FORT EDWARD, MARCH 8, 1857.

DEAR BROTHER ROBERTS:

This morning I received your letter, giving the information of the death of our dear Brother Kendall. You say he died in triumph. Let us raise the shout of victory for him here, while he sings praise above. He will have no more hard appointments; thank God!

The hours I have spent with him are very pleasant in their recollection. I think the church and the world might have had him longer, if they had used him better.

I shall try to build on the Rock against which the gates of Hell can not prevail. I can yet say, none of these things move me. The truth of God, "the whole truth, and nothing but the truth," I am endeavoring yet to publish to a lost and helpless world, and am not left alone in so doing. I have been at various places the past winter, laboring to bring men to Christ, and have seen the salvation of the Lord.

Please write to me as often as you can. Keep me apprised of all movements that are of interest to yourself or the cause of God.

I remain as ever, your brother and companion in the labor and patience of Jesus, and hope to meet with you and yours in the glorious rest that remains for the people of God.

Farewell.

SEYMOUR COLEMAN.

CHAPTER V.

RELIGION OF THE MAJORITY.

Bishop Simpson says, speaking of those with whom the Free Methodist Church originated:

"In their writings and speeches they complained of the decline of spirituality in the church, charging the church with tolerating, for the sake of gain, the worldly practices of its members, and its departure both in doctrine and discipline from the teachings of the fathers."

In showing the state of religion promoted by the dominant party in the Genesee Conference, we shall first lay before our readers the accounts which we published respecting it at the time. We shall then show from their own confessions that our representation was more favorable than the reality.

In the church trials that took place at that time, every effort was made by the dominant party to make out as strong a case as possible against those whom they intended to expel. In making out charges against those whom they had decided to try, it is right to conclude that they brought the worst accusations which they thought they could prove. Party feeling ran high, and inclination and interest com-

bined to lead them to make out as bad a case as possible against their opponents. They were not in a mood to convict one of these of handing a brother an obnoxious tract, when they thought they could convict him of anything serious.

I was tried for writing an article published in the *Northern Independent*, entitled "New School Methodism." It is fair to conclude that this is as bad a specimen of the class of writings to which the Bishop alludes, as could be found.

We had previously been styled "New school Methodists," in an article published in the *BuffaloAdvocate*, the organ of the dominant party. We showed that the appellation properly belonged to our opponents. Though differing with them, we wished to treat them fairly. So we took this course. For fear that we might misrepresent their views, we stated them as we found them expressed by one of their leading preachers in an editorial of the *Buffalo Advocate*, and copied into the *New York Christian Advocate and Journal.* It set forth, as we believed then, and as we believe still, the doctrinal views from which we differed. This article, from which we quoted fairly, was indorsed by leading men of the dominant party. We never heard of its being

disapproved by any of that party. The fact that there was a great division in the Conference had become notorious. Our opponents had, from time to time, in the *Buffalo Advocate* and other papers, in neither truthful nor respectful language, set forth their version of matters. We thought the time had come for us to set ourselves right before the public. This we endeavored to do in the following article which was published over our well known signature in the *Northern Independent*, of which I was at the time, a corresponding editor.

We call especial attention to it, as it is their own selection of the worst things which we had said against them.

"NEW SCHOOL METHODISM.

The best seed, sown, from year to year, on poor soil, gradually degenerates. The acorn, from the stately oak, planted upon the arid plain, becomes a stinted shrub. Ever since the fall, the human heart has proved a soil unfavorable to the growth of truth.

Noxious weeds flourish everywhere spontaneously, while the useful grains require diligent cultivation.

Correct principles implanted in the mind need constant attention, or monstrous errors will overtop them and root them out. Every old nation tells the tale of her own degeneracy, and points to the golden age when truth and justice reigned among men.

Religious truth is not exempt from this liability to

corruption. "God will take care of his own cause," is a maxim often quoted by the cowardly and the compromising, as an apology for their base defection. When His servants are faithful to the trusts reposed in them, it is gloriously true; when they waver, His cause suffers. The Churches planted by the Apostles, and watered by the blood of martyrs, now outvie heathenism itself in their corruptions. No other parts of the world are so inaccessible to Gospel truth as those countries where the Romish and Greek Churches hold dominion.

As a denomination, we are just as liable to fall by corrupting influences, as any were that have flourished before us. We enjoy no immunity from danger. Already there is springing up among us a class of preachers whose teaching is very different from that of the fathers of Methodism. They may be found here and there throughout our Zion; but in the Genesee Conference they act as an associate body. They number about thirty. During the last session of this Conference, they held several secret meetings, in which they concerted a plan to carry their measures and spread their doctrines. They have openly made the issue in the Conference. It is divided. Two distinct parties exist. With one or the other every preacher is in sympathy. This difference is fundamental. It does not relate to things indifferent, but to those of the most vital importance. It involves nothing less than the nature itself of Christianity.

In showing the doctrines of the New School Methodists, we shall quote from *The Advocate* of the sect, published at Buffalo. This is the organ of the

party. It is sustained by them. They act as its agents. Where their influence prevails, it is circulated to the exclusion of other religious papers. Its former title was "*The Buffalo Christian Advocate.*" But since its open avowal of the new doctrines, it has significantly dropped from its caption, the expressive word "*Christian.*" This omission is full of meaning. It is, however, highly proper, as we shall see when we examine its new theory of religion. We commend the editor for this instance of honesty. It is now simply "*The Advocate;*" that is, the *only* Advocate of the tenets it defends.

The New School Methodists affect as great a degree of liberalism as do Theodore Parker and Mr. Newman. They profess "charity" for everybody except their brethren of the Old School. In an article on "Creeds," published in *The Advocate* of April 16th, under the signature of W. the Rev. writer, a prominent New School minister, lays it on to "the sects whose watchword is a creed," in a manner not unworthy of Alexander Campbell himself. He says, "No matter how holy and blameless a man's life may be, if he has the temerity to question any tenet of 'orthodoxy,' he is at once, in due ecclesiastical form, consigned to the Devil—as a heretic and infidel. Thus are the fetters of a spiritual despotism thrown around the human reason. * * * * And so it has come to pass, that in the estimation of multitudes—the teachings of Paul are eclipsed by the theories of Calvin, and the writings of John Wesley are held in higher veneration than the inspired words of St. John." Is not this a modest charge?

But their theory of religion is more fully set forth

in the leading editorial of *The Advocate* for May 14th, under the title—*Christianity a religion of beneficence rather than of devotion.*" Though it appears as editorial, we have good reason to believe that it was written by a leading New School member of the Genesee Conference. It has not been disavowed by that party. Though it has been before the public for months, no one has expressed a dissent from its positions. It is fair to suppose, that it represents the views of the leaders of this new movement.

It says, "Christianity is not characteristically, a system of devotion. *It has none of those features* which must distinguish a religion grounded on the idea, that to adore the Divine character is the most imperative obligation resting upon human beings. It enjoins the observance of but very few sacred rites; nor does it prescribe any *particular mode* for paying homage to the Deity. It eschews all exterior forms, and teaches that they who worship God must worship him in spirit and in truth."

The Old School Methodists hold, that "to adore the Divine character" is the most imperative obligation resting upon human beings—that Christianity has *all* of those features that must distinguish a religion grounded on this idea. That he who worships God rightly, will, as a necessary consequence, possess all social and moral virtues; that the Gospel does not leave its votaries to choose, if they please, the degrading rites of heathenism, or the superstitious abominations of Popery; but prescribes prayer and praise and the observance of the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper, "as particular modes for paying homage to the Deity;" that there is no necessity for

antagonism, as Infidels and Universalists are wont to affirm, between spiritual worship and the forms of worship instituted by Christ.

The following sneer is not unworthy of Thomas Paine himself. It falls below the dignity of Voltaire. "Christianity in nowise gives countenance to the supposition, that the Great Jehovah is so affected with the infirmity of vanity, as to receive with *peculiarly* grateful emotions, the attention and offerings which poor human creatures may pay directly to Him in worship."

The above may be sufficient to show what Christianity is not, in the opinion of these New School divines. Let us now see what it is. "The characteristic idea of this system is benevolence; and its practical realization is achieved in beneficence. It consecrates the principle of charity, and instructs its votaries to regard good works as the holiest sacrifice, and the most acceptable which they can bring to the Almighty. * * * * * * *

"Whatever graces may be necessary to constitute the inner Chritian life, the chief and principal one of these, is *love to man.* * * * The great condition upon which one becomes a participant of the Gospel salvation, is—some practical exhibition of self-abnegation, of self-sacrifice for the good of others. *Go sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor*, were the only terms of salvation which Christ proposed to the young man, who otherwise, was not far from the kingdom of heaven."

The Old School Methodists hold that benevolence is only *one of the fruits* of true religion, but by no means the thing itself. In their view, "The principal

grace of the inner Christian life" is LOVE TO GOD; and "the most acceptable sacrifice we can render HIM, is a broken and contrite heart. They teach tbat the great condition upon which one becomes "a participant of the Gospel salvation" IS FAITH IN CHRIST—preceded by repentance. They read in the Gospel that the young man referred to, was commanded by Christ to "*come, take up the cross and follow me.*" The giving of his goods to the poor was only preparatory to this.

The New School Methodists hold that justification and entire sanctification, or holiness, are the same—that when a sinner is pardoned, he is at the same time made holy—that all the spiritual change he may henceforth expect, is simply a growth in grace.—When they speak of "holiness," they mean by it the same as do evangelical ministers of those denominations which do not receive the doctrines taught by Wesley and Fletcher on this subject.

According to the Old School Methodists, merely justified persons, while they do not outwardly commit sin, are conscious of sin still remaining in the heart, such as pride, self-will, and unbelief. They continually feel a heart bent to back-sliding; a natural tendency to evil; a proneness to depart from God, and cleave to the things of earth. Those that are sanctified wholly, are saved from all inward sin—from evil thoughts, and evil tempers. No wrong temper, none contrary to love, remains in the soul. All the thoughts, words and actions are governed by pure love.

The New School ministers have the frankness to acknowledge that their doctrines are not the doc-

trines of the Church. They have undertaken to correct the teachings of her standard authors. In the same editorial of "The Advocate," from which we have quoted so largely, we read: "So in the exercises and means of grace instituted by the Church, it is clearly apparent that respect is had, rather to the excitation of the religious sensibilities, and the culture of emotional piety, than the development of genial and humane dispositions, and the formation of habits of active, vigorous goodness."

Here the evils complained of are charged upon "*the exercises and means of grace, instituted by the Church.*" They do not result from a perversion of the means of grace, but are the effects *intended* to be produced in their institution. It is THE CHURCH, then, that is wrong—and so far wrong that she does not even *aim* at the development of proper Christian character. "The means of grace," in the use of which an Asbury, an Olin, a Hedding, and a host of worthies departed and living, were nurtured to spiritual manhood, must be abolished; and others, adapted to the "development of genial and humane dispositions," established in their place. The lodge must supersede the class and the love feast; and the old fashioned prayer meeting must give way to the social party! Those who founded or adopted "the exercises and means of grace instituted by the Church"—Paul and Peter, the Martyrs and Reformers, Luther and Wesley, Calvin and Edwards—all have failed to comprehend the true idea of Christianity—for these all held that the sinner was justified by *Faith in Christ*, and not by "some practical exhibition of self-abnegation." The honor of distinctly apprehending

and clearly stating the true genius of Christianity, was reserved for a few divines of the nineteenth century!

In our next we shall show the usages and results so far as developed, of New School Methodism.

USAGES—RESULTS.

Differing thus in their views of religion, the Old and New School Methodists necessarily differ in their measures for its promotion. The latter build stock churches, and furnish them with pews to accommodate a select congregation; and with organs, melodeons, violins, and professional singers, to execute difficult pieces of music for a fashionable audience. The former favor free churches, congregational singing, and spirituality, simplicity and fervency in worship. They endeavor to promote revivals, deep and thorough; such as were common under the labors of the Fathers; such as have made Methodism the leading denomination of the land. The leaders of the New Divinity movement are not remarkable for promoting revivals; and those which do, occasionally, occur among them, may generally be characterized as the editor of "*the Advocate*" designated one which fell under his notice, as "*splendid revivals.*" Preachers of the old stamp urge upon all who would gain heaven, the necessity of self-denial—non-conformity to the world; purity of heart and holiness of life; while the others ridicule singularity, encourage by their silence, and in some cases by their own example, and that of their wives and daughters, "the putting on of gold and costly apparel," and treat with distrust all professions of deep Christian experience. When these desire to raise money for the benefit of

the Church, they have recourse to the selling of pews to the highest bidder; to parties of pleasure, oyster suppers, fairs, grab-bags, festivals and lotteries; the others for this purpose, appeal to the love the people bear to Christ. In short, the Old School Methodists rely for the spread of the gospel upon the agency of the Holy Ghost, and the purity of the Church. The New School Methodists appear to depend upon the patronage of the worldly, the favor of the proud and aspiring; and the various artifices of worldly policy.

If this diversity of opinion and of practice among the ministers of our denomination, was confined to one Conference, it would be comparatively unimportant. But unmistakable indications show that prosperity is producing upon us, as a denomination, the same intoxicating effect, that it too often does upon individuals and societies. The change, by the General Conference of 1852, in the rule of Discipline, requiring that all our houses of worship should be built plain, and with free seats; and that of the last General Conference in the section respecting dress, show that there are already too many among us, who would take down the barriers that have hitherto separated us from the world. The fact that the removal is gradual, so as not to excite too much attention and commotion, renders it none the less alarming.

Every lover of the Church must feel a deep anxiety to know what is to be the result of this new order of things. If we may judge by its effects in the Genesee Conference, since it has held sway there, it will prove disastrous to us as a denomination. It so happened, either by accident, or by management, at the

division of the Genesee Conference, eight years ago, that most of the unmanageable veterans, who could neither be induced to depart from the Heaven honored usages of Methodism, by the specious cry of "progress" nor to wink at such departures, by the mild expostulations of Eli, "Why do ye thus my sons!" had their destination upon the east side of Genesee River. The first year after the division, the East Genesee Conference had twenty superannuated preachers; the Genesee Conference but five. "Men of progress" in the prime of life, went west of the river, and took possession of the Conference. For the most part, they have borne sway there ever since. Of late, the young men of the Conference, uniting with the fathers, and thus united, comprising a majority of the Conference, have endeavored to stop this "progress" away from the old paths of Methodism. But the "progressives" make up in management what they lack in numbers. Having free access at all times to the ears of the Episcopacy, they have succeeded, for the most part, in controlling the appointments to the districts and most important stations. If, by reason of his obvious fitness, any impracticable adherent of primitive Methodism has been appointed to a district or first class station, he has usually been pursued, with untiring diligence, and hunted from his position before his constitutional term expired.

In the bounds of the Genesee Conference, the people generally are pre-possessed in favor of Methodism. During the past eight years there have been no external causes operating there against our prosperity, that do not operate at all times and in all places.

Within this period, the nominal increase of the Church in that Conference has been but seven hundred and eighty. The East Genesee Conference has had an increase, within the same time, of about two thousand five hundred. In order to have simply kept pace with the population, there should have been within the bounds of the Genesee Conference, one thousand six hundred and forty-three more members than there are at present. That is in eight years, under the reign of new divinity, the Church has suffered, within the bounds of this one Conference, a relative loss of fifteen per cent in members.

The Seminary at Lima, at the time of the division, second to none in the land, has, by the same kind of management, been brought to the brink of financial ruin.

We have thus endeavored to give a fair and impartial representation of New School Methodism. Its prevalence in one Conference has already, as we have seen, involved it in division and disaster. Let it generally prevail, and the glory will depart from Methodism. She has a special mission to accomplish. This is, not to gather into her fold the proud and fashionable, the devotees of pleasure and ambition, but, "to spread scripture holiness over these lands." Her doctrines, and her usages, her hymns, her history and her spirit, her noble achievements in the past, and her bright prospects for the future, all forbid that she should adopt an accommodating, compromising policy, pandering to the vices of the times. Let her go on, as she has done, insisting that the great, cardinal truths of the Gospel shall receive a living embodiment in the hearts and lives of her members,

and Methodism will continue to be the favored of Heaven, and the joy of earth. But let her come down from her position, and receive to her com munion all those lovers of pleasure, and lovers of the world, who are willing to pay for the privilege, and it needs no prophet's vision to foresee that Methodism will become a dead and corrupting body, endeavoring in vain to supply, by the erection of splendid churches, and the imposing performance of powerless ceremonies, the manifested glory of the Divine presence, which once shone so brightly in all her sanctuaries.

'*Thus saith the Lord, stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.*'"

Is there anything wrong in that article? That was our representation of the state of religion in the Genesee Conference at that time.

We give the opinion which responsible parties expressed of that article when it first appeared.

Dr. Hibbard, who was, at that time, editor of the *Northern Christian Advocate*, to whom we sent the article for publication sent us the following letter. After it was clear that we were in the minority, Dr. Hibbard wrote against us with great zeal and, as we think, unfairness.

"DEAR BROTHER ROBERTS:

I return your communication as you requested, not feeling it prudent to publish. I presume you can not see things as I do from my stand point. Your

communication would involve me in hopeless controversy, which would make me much trouble and perplexity, with no hope, as I view it, of doing substantial good to the church, or cause of Christ. I do not speak this against your article considered by itself, but of the controversy which your article would occasion. *Your article appears to me to be written in as mild and candid a tone as such facts can be stated in.* Be assured, my dear Brother, that in the doctrine of holiness, in the life and power of religion, in the integrity and spirit of Methodism, I have a deep and lively interest. I labor to promote these. But I could not feel justified in taking sides in the question that now unhappily divides the Genesee Conference. May the Lord bless you and all his ministers, and give peace and purity to the churches.

Ever yours in Christ,

AUBURN, Aug. 10, 1857. F. G. HIBBARD."

A presiding elder of the Oneida Conference wrote us, soon after the publication of our article, as follows:

"SEPT. 1, 1857.

DEAR BROTHER:

I am gratified with your exposure of the "New Divinity," that is cursing our church. It is creeping into our Conference and doing immense mischief. Keep the monster in the light."

Another prominent minister of the same Conference wrote us:

"If you had belonged to our Conference we would have given you a vote of thanks for writing that article."

Such is the opinion of distinguished men, well qualified to judge, of our account of the state of religion, which the dominant party were promoting.

We give a few extracts from their own writings to show that their opinion, when they had the candor and the courage to express it, did not differ so materially from ours. Read them carefully, and see if their own representation of the state of religion among them is not worse than the one we gave.

The following editorial from the *Buffalo Advocate*, was copied into the *Christian Advocate and Journal:*

"RELIGIOUS INTEREST IN BUFFALO.

We have none; we have no more than is usual through the year. We do not intend to convey the idea by the above heading that there is any special movement among us, or that there is any marked efforts toward getting souls converted, or keeping those converted who are already in the Church. The great movement among us is, we judge, to determine how far the church can go back to the world, and save its semblance to piety, devotion, and truth. Hence, many, many Church members have become the most frivolous and pleasure-loving, and folly-taking part of our towns people. They love, give and sustain the most popular, worldly amusements, such as dancing, parties, card-parties, drinking-parties, masquerade and surprise parties, and have no disposition to come out from the world and be separate

from it. All this may be seen, read and known in more or less of the Buffalo churches."

We ask any intelligent person if these are not more serious charges than any to be found in our article on "New School Methodism." We dealt more with speculative opinions—but this article accuses them of a want of experimental and practical piety.

The Rev. Wm. Hart commented in the *Northern Independent* on the above article as follows:

"Now the question is, are these charges true or false? If false, is the *Advocate* aware what it costs to slander the church in these days? It saw a couple of men beheaded for an offence which dwindles into superlative insignificance, when compared with these wholesale charges. Let us look at them.

1st. No effort towards getting souls converted.

2d. No effort to keep souls converted.

3d. 'The great movement,' 'the marked effort is to gain a position where they can just balance between God and the devil.'

4th. 'The church members are frivolous, folly-loving, and pleasure-taking, *even more so* than those who are openly in the way to hell.'

5th. 'They love, give and sustain dancing parties, card-parties and drinking-parties; etc., and have no disposition to do otherwise.'

These are the charges; now for the testimony. Bro. Robie called. Are the above charges true respecting the churches in Buffalo? Ans. 'All this may be

seen, read and known in more or less of the Buffalo Churches.'

Dr. Stevens sends out these awful charges to his thousands of readers, on the simple assertion of the *Advocate*, without waiting to know the facts. How he has anathamatized the *Northern Independent*, as villifying and slandering the church; but since its commencement, to the present day, where will we find anything to equal the above from Bros. Robie and Stevens? Now if the above charges cannot be sustained, should not Bro. Robie be prosecuted for slandering the Buffalo churches, and Dr. Stevens for "publishing and circulating" "slanderous reports?" If they belonged to the Genesee Conference, and were charged with abusing and slandering the church, they would, ecclesiastically, be sent higher than Haman. In the Genesee Conference, the above extract from the *Advocate*, would be considered as slanderous, whether true or false. So, Messrs. Editors, you had better take care. What was Bro. Roberts' and McCreery's fault, compared with yours? Where or when have these brethren ever said anything half so severe as this from the *Advocate?* But, if what Bro. Robie writes be true, why all this hue and cry against the so-called Nazarites? The same ungodly influences, and the same proneness to comply with them exist in other places as well as Buffalo. And would it be strange, if like causes produce results like those now being experienced by the Churches in Buffalo? The same state of things narrated by the *Advocate*, has and does exist in other places. The temptations of the devil have been listened to, and the prayer meeting has given way to the social party;

entire consecration has died, out and the spirit of compromise between the Church and the world obtains; formality and indifference respecting the salvation of souls, have taken the place of spirituality, and the love which constrains 'to seek the wandering souls of men.' To counteract these effects, a few faithful souls stood up for Jesus, and like the Hebrew children, declared they would not fall down and worship the worldly gods which those 'frivolous, folly-loving and pleasure-taking members' and ministers are setting up. This, as everybody knows, that knows any thing about it, was the origin of Nazaritism. The natural antagonism between sin and holiness has caused all the trouble. While the current flows along, as Bro. Robie says it does in Buffalo, and nobody stands up for Jesus and proclaims the whole truth, they will have peace and prosperity; but it will be the peace of death, and the prosperity of those 'whose eyes stand out with fatness.' If Bro. Robie would stand out as an uncompromising exponent of the whole truth, and in the might of the Spirit bear a decided and open testimony against all worldly connections and associations that are cursing the Churches in Buffalo, he would see such a commotion and storm of opposition, as has been seen and felt in other places. But, glory to God, souls would be awakened and saved. Then would commence the work of persecution, for, as he that was born after the flesh, persecuted Him that was born after the Spirit, '*even so is it now.*' If Bro. Robie would take this position with an eye single to the glory of God, and seek to root out dead formality, by a living, earnest Christianity, and make '*special efforts*' for

the conversion of sinners, he would be to all intents and purposes, a Nazarite. Will Bro. Robie take this stand, and see and feel the salvation of God, or will he let the Buffalo Churches drift down to everlasting woe, unwarned, he following in their wake?"

The means adopted to promote this religion, which ridiculed without mercy "a religion of devotion," were not unworthy of the religion sought to be promoted.

We extract from the *Buffalo Courier* the following friendly notice of a "Clam bake and chowder festival," held for the benefit of the Niagara Street M. E. Church:

"CLAM BAKE AND CHOWDER.

The spot selected for the clambake was Clinton Forest, situated about a half a mile from the road. This place, containing about twenty acres, was surrounded by a neat board fence, and ten cents was demanded from each visitor for admission within the enclosure. Within we found thousands of people, some ventilating their garments on swings, some playing games of different descriptions, hundreds eating ice-cream, coffee, ham, fowls, and other substantials, while the great mass opened, swallowed or gorged themselves with clams. Clams was the cry—from every corner came the echo, clams! clams! and the odor of clams went up and down, odorous as exquisite ottars, and fragrant as a back-kitchen about dinner-time.

At other points on the ground were many tables, spread with delicacies of all sorts, behind which handsome women added their voices to urge on appetite;

flower tables were many, where young and pretty damsels waylaid pecunious young men with their eyes, and persuaded them into floral purchases; ice-cream booths, where shillings were exchanged for the frigid luxury, accompanied with parallelogrammatic sections of sponge cake; there were other places where money could be laid out to advantage in many ways, but of them we remember none. At the rope-walk, a building which appeared to us to be a mile long, a large crowd had collected, and to the music of two bands were jumping about and perspiring to their heart's content, which privilege cost each dancer ten cents. The air in this place was so intensely hot and high flavored, that we positively failed to get the programme of the dances. In the main grounds, the Union Cornet band, with their new instruments, delighted the crowds with their music, while the Twilight Serenaders were kept musical all day long, by the voices of women and girls, who surrounded them with a rampart of charms, denying their egress without some specimen of their vocal attributes. The singers fairly made themselves hoarse with their efforts. All was hilarity and enjoyment throughout the afternoon, everybody appearing to be happy just in proportion as they had absorbed clams. We call particular attention to this *new* social meteor, in consequence of hearing some gentlemen, who never were considered musical, successfully attempting the "Star Spangled Banner," with variations, about thirty rods from Clinton Forest, where a contraband lager beer merchant had opened his wares. No one will be unkind enough to intimate that the music came from the lager. No!

The festival altogether was a success, and has initiated a new order of excursions, which we hope will be followed up. The receipts at the gate were over four hundred dollars, we understand, and at the different booths, etc., several hundred dollars more. The proceeds are for the benefit of the Niagara street Methodist Church, and will prove a great assistance to them in paying off the debt of the church. The ladies, particularly, deserve the highest encomiums for their efforts and attempts to make the festival a model one, and carrying it on to triumph."

The person who stood at the door of the rope-walk and collected "ten cents" of each one who attended the dance, was said to be a member of one of the M. E. churches in the city; and the proceeds, after "paying for the music," went to the benefit of the church. The character of those who in a city like Buffalo would be likely to attend a ten-cent dance held under the auspices of a respectable church, may be readily imagined.

The Niagara St. Church, for the benefit of which this festival was held, was the oldest M. E. Church in the city. It was once highly prosperous. Here Eleazer Thomas preached holiness, after the pattern of Asbury, in the power of the Holy Ghost. At this church we were stationed the fifth year of our ministry. It was the only appointment made for us with which we ever tried to interfere. We felt

deeply our lack of ability, experience and grace, to fill so important a position. We entreated the Bishop not to send us there. But when we were sent, we resolved to do our duty faithfully. God kept us from compromising, and gave us a good revival of religion. The members generally were quickened and many sinners were converted. A few—less than half a dozen—composed of secret society men, and one or two proud women, encouraged by a former, secret society pastor, held out and opposed the work.

Ever since the church edifice had been built, there had been on it a mortgage of a few thousand dollars. This we agreed to see paid if they would make the seats free. We had a good proportion of the amount necessary to do it pledged, when at the end of the first year, through the influence above referred to, we were removed, and a man of the other party sent in our place. The people were finally persuaded that what they needed was a more imposing church edifice. So the church—a very substantial stone building—was remodeled, a new front built, a large organ placed in the gallery, and tall gothic chairs in the pulpit. All the money was raised that could be raised by selling the pews, by taxing the members to the utmost of their ability, and by making one

of the largest liquor dealers in the city trustee and treasurer. So great was the zeal excited among the members to "save the church," that one of the most godly women we had known up to this time, was induced to preside at one of the tables at the clam-bake and chowder entertainment!

But all was of no avail—the church edifice was sold to pay the indebtedness upon it, and the members were scattered. This church has, for many years, been a Jewish synagogue.

After violently freeing the Conference from the presence and influence of those whom they had pronounced "disturbers of its peace," and obstacles to its prosperity, the dominant party became alarmed at its rapid decline from even their own standard of prosperity. In their minutes for 1865, they published a report on "The State of the Work," on which report the editor of the *Northern Independent* had the courage to comment as follows:

"GENESEE CONFERENCE OF M. E. CHURCH.

A copy of the Minutes of the last session of this Conference lies upon our table. Its mechanical execution is excellent, and reflects credit upon all concerned. With the matter in general, we are equally pleased. Each page, if we except the account of the "Conference Camp-meeting," bears marks of diligence and candor. But what strikes us most, is the report on the 'State of the Work.' It is able,

pungent, truthful, humiliating. Yet it would have been more so, had all the facts in the case come out. Their language of confession wants translating, and then it would read much like the following:

'They said one to another, we are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear: therefore is this distress come upon us.' And Reuben answered them, saying, spake I not unto you, saying, 'Do not sin against the child, and ye would not hear? Wherefore behold also his blood is required.'—Gen. xlii, 21, 22.

But let us have their own statement of the sad condition of affairs in a Conference from which all traces of Nazaritism and 'Contumacy' have been carefully excluded. As this purgation has been eminently expensive to common sense, moral principle, and Methodist Discipline, one would suppose that it might have been prolific of mere numbers and of a certain kind of self-respect. Yet, even in these poor results it fails, and hence they say:

1. "Our revivals have not been, either in number or extent, what we desired, or had reason to expect. Are we God's ministers, commissioned and sent forth by the Great Head of the Church, to win souls to Christ, and must we, in so many instances, pass on, year after year, with no marked results? Are we doing our whole duty, as preachers of the everlasting Gospel, while the years go by, and that Gospel seems essentially powerless in our ministrations? While we are the appointed guardians of the churches, must we, of necessity see them moving on to inevitable extinction? This is not God's will.

The fault lies, in part, at least, at our own doors. There is, on the part of many of us, cause for profound humiliation before God, and for the most serious inquiry whether we are not essentially failing of the great ends of our ministry.

2. "Another unfavorable feature in our condition is the fact, that in many, perhaps in most of our churches, the membership is made up, almost wholly, of persons far advanced in life. We see among them very few of the young. In a large portion of our churches, we rarely find a young man in the Official Board. This indicates a lamentable want of extensive revivals among us, for the PAST TEN YEARS. These aged persons in our churches are true and faithful, and worthy of all honor. But they will soon pass to the church triumphant. There are, perhaps, scores of churches in our Conference, the very existence of which seems to depend on the lives of one, two or three men now far advanced in years. These men are rapidly passing away. It is obvious that, in many places, nothing can save our cause but powerful and far reaching revivals of religion.

"Another very great evil among us, and one fraught with most damaging results to God's cause and all our interests as a Conference, is the engaging in secular pursuits by so many of our ministers. This evil, during the past two years, has been largely on the increase. It is needless to spend time to show the error of a practice so obviously contrary to both the spirit and letter of our commission, and of our ministerial vows. We claim to have obeyed the voice of the Master, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature," at the altars of the church.

In the presence of God and man we have solemnly pledged to be men of one work, and how can we, conscientiously, engage in occupations that must divide our interest, energies, time, and affections. This practice is alarmingly shaking the confidence of the people in us, as ministers of the Lord Jesus. They say we are as greedy of gain, as covetous of large possessions, as easily swept into wild speculations as any other class of men. This loss of confidence in the ministry is not confined to those alone who engage in secular pursuits, but extends measurably to the whole body. Thus the innocent suffer with the guilty, and our hold upon the people is lost."

The chronology of the above is worthy of note, and we have marked it by putting the words in capitals. It is now almost ten years since that Conference arrested the character of one of its ablest and most useful ministers, and finally expelled him for slander—which slander consisted in writing an article for this paper, on "New School Methodism." The article reflected pretty severely on some usages current in that and other Conferences, but was not one whit more scathing than this report on the "State of the Church." Its allegations indeed were not as broad, nor were its developments as alarming. A keen observer, however, at that time saw the evil in its incipiency—saw a ministry shorn of its strength, secularized, unsuccessful, and the church dying out—saw exactly what this official document declares began to exist ten years ago. The brave man whose eyes, anointed of God, saw this deplorable condition of the Genesee Conference, should have been rewarded by something better than expulsion, for he

meant well, spoke well, and is now fully endorsed by the Conference itself. We saw the injustice done, saw it at the time it was done, and gave notice of the fact; but our words were then, as they probably will be now, unheeded, and the Conference went on its way trying men for "Contumacy" and expelling such large numbers of their very best ministers and laymen, that absolute ecclesiastical annihilation stares them in the face. This result will surprise none. It is but the inevitable consequence of a wrong course. Had the leaders of that once prosperous section of the Church listened to good counsel, they would not be uttering their *De profundis*, but their *Nunc dimittis*, and each valiant soldier of the cross, looking back over a well contested field could say, "I have fought a good fight."

Ten years of spiritual barrenness, the secularization of the ministry to such an extent that the people have lost confidence in them, and many other evidences of decline should satisfy the Conference that it has done wrong—that its administration has cast down those whom God has not cast down. By way of helping them out of their trouble, we suggest that the Conference at once reconsider its action in the case of all who have been expelled on mere technical grounds, and thus restore those on whose account God has sent leanness into all their borders."

The Conference as a body went on a few years longer. Many of the leading preachers had lost the confidence of the people to that degree that they took transfers to other Con-

ferences. New men were introduced to supply the work. But all was of no avail. They could not get up even a show of prosperity. They were united with other Conferences for a time—their name changed—and after a general change of preachers, were again restored as a Conference, with the old name. But with all this management, and with the help of such lodges as could be drawn into the support of a religious sect, there has been a steady decline.

In their minutes for 1858 they reported:

Members and probationers, 13,656

In 1878, on the same territory, 12,744

showing as the result of the labors for twenty years of over one hundred preachers in a territory in which the people are prepossessed in favor of Methodism, a decrease of nine hundred and twelve members.

Of the state of religion in general, at that time the Rev. Jesse T., now Bishop Peck wrote:

"What a mass of backsliders there are now in the church, for the very reason that they have been satisfied without going on to perfection."

Of the light given by the baptism of the Holy Ghost, he said:

"It trembles to see that the outward splendor of the church, once deemed the reliable evidences of success, are but the attire of a harlot, both revealing and inviting illicit intercourse with a godless world."

Do you find anything as severe as that in "New School Methodism?"

From all that we learn, we judge that the state of religion generally has not, under this new dispensation, greatly improved. We quote the following, which is going the round of the papers, credited to Dr. Newman:

"The morality of the church is radically defective. The church is rich, and she is extravagant. The pleasures of the world are more to her than the joys of piety. Her love of gain is a by-word. She stretches out her arms to grasp the islands of the sea, while the fires of devotion burn dimly on her altars. Many a church member, who often says, 'Lord, Lord,' would let a piece of property for a saloon where husband and father spend their time and money in drink; or for a gambling place, where young men are ruined; because he can command thereby a higher rent."

Is not reform in the church still needed?

We have thus given our readers the article which the dominant party in the Genesee Conference selected as the worst which we had written against them. From their own published accounts we have shown that the state of religion among them was even worse than we had represented.

CHAPTER VI.

THE PROSCRIBED RELIGION.

In showing the kind of religion promoted by the men proscribed by the Genesee Conference, we shall give a specimen of the accounts published about it by their opposers. We shall then, in order to prove the falsity of these representations, give the reports made by disinterested witnesses, of some of the most objectionable of the meetings held under the auspices of the men accused of promoting "a spirit of wild fanaticism."

For the articles published at that time by the proscribed, responsible names were given. We endeavored to write the truth, and were willing to meet it. Those who wrote against us generally did so over fictitious signatures. For the editorials which appeared in the *Buffalo Advocate*, and in the *Northern Christian Advocate*, the editors of course assumed the responsibility. Numerous false and vindictive attacks were made by unknown parties. They did their best to kill reputations, but like assassins, "concealed the hand that struck the blow."

We quote from one of the most respectable

of these writings. It was first published in the *Medina Tribune*, Sept. 11, 1856, a year before "New School Methodism" was written. It is evident that its author was a member of the Conference:

"NAZARITE REFORMERS AND REFORMATION.

Spurious reformers are as plenty as blackberries, and as contemptible as plenty. Incapable of comprehending the moral condition and wants of society around them, and also of understanding the modes or processes by which reformation is to be effected, they believe, or affect to believe, that they are the chosen instruments of some greatly needed social regeneration—whose necessity or possibility, none, beside themselves, are able to discover. Mistaking a desire to do something grand, for a call to a great undertaking; and the wish to be known to fame, for a prophetic intimation of some splendid achievement—they go forth before the world, putting on strange and uncouth airs, which they expect everybody will regard as proof of the 'divine fury' with which they are possessed; and repeating nonsensical and clap-trap phrases, which they have mistakingly selected as the watchwords of a reformatory movement. The ridiculous figure they cut excites the laughter and jeers of all—save those who are as addled and silly as themselves. By such, however, they are frequently mistaken for real prophets; and the gaining of a few proselytes always confirms both in their lunacy.

We, of the Genesee Conference, have such a batch of false prophets—such pseudo reformers among us. And such a group of regenerators as the Nazarites com-

pose, we can not believe was ever before brought together by the force of a common belief in a divine call to a great work. Whence, or why the idea ever struck them that *they* were the chosen ministers of a new reformation, will probably never be rescued from the dimness and uncertainty of speculation. They probably felt the motion of something within them—it may have been wind in the stomach—and mistook it for the intimations of a heaven-derived commission, summoning them to the rescue of expiring Methodism, and the inauguration of a new era of spiritual life in the history of the Wesleyan movement.

Take a look at this knot of men in the light of correctors of spiritual abuses and corruption—and it is under this title that they present themselves in their confederated Nazarite capacity, to the Methodist public. They pretend that many wicked and corrupt practices have grown up in the church—and above all in the ministry, and claim that they have come forward as the champions of primitive and gospel purity, simplicity and holiness. In taking upon themselves this character and office, they not only accuse their ministerial brethren of having 'departed from the faith,' but also, assume that they themselves are pre-eminent for moral cleanliness and Christian purity. The modesty of these pretensions can not fail to excite the admiration of all. But the truth of these pretensions is what we are more particularly interested in. *Are* these men so much better—morally and religiously—than their compeers, as they would have the world believe? What fruits of transcendant godliness do they exhibit? Their professions indeed are loud and pretentious, but what of their

works? Does holiness display itself in spiritual pride, in arrogant boastings of goodness, in canting and crabbed long-facedness, in gross and filthy vituperations? In that case the palm of excellence must indeed be yielded to them. Upon what meat, pray, do these Nazarites feed that they have grown good so fast?

To them, religion still appears to be a system of outward forms and symbols, of material ceremonies, and corporal manifestations, of animal influence and nervous sensations. With them, a long face and sanctimonious airs answer for inward purity and goodness of heart. In their creed, a high-sounding profession takes precedence of a holy life, and getting happy in a religious meeting is laid down as an indubitable proof of the divine favor. Boisterous shouting and screaming, ... while engaged in devotional exercises, they call serving God. An observance of certain prudential, disciplinary requirements, they esteem a more important duty than the practice of the precepts contained in the golden rule. They consider plainness in dress of greater moment than uprightness of character. An ornamental ribbon or flower upon a lady's bonnet is—in their eyes,—an enormity greater than the sin of lying: and the wearing a ring or bracelet they think is more dangerous and damning than covetousness or slander; and generally, they preach with more powerful vehemence against superfluity of outward apparel, than against the breach of the Ten Commandments. With them, a broad-brimmed, bell-crowned hat is equivalent to "the helmet of salvation," and a shad-bellied coat to the robe of righteousness.

But what *means* do these reformers employ to accomplish their ends? Do they go forth to the people with words of truth and soberness, striving to make men better by pressing, with fervent eloquence and earnest, rational appeals, the declaration of God's word upon the heart and conscience of the hearers? No; their harangues to the people consist of factious addresses, cant phrases, and rant; of protestations of their own spotlessness, and both open and concealed imputations upon the Christian and ministerial character of their brethren. JUNIUS."

Among the older members of the Conference understood to belong to the class to which this article refers, were such men as Asa Abell, Benajah Williams, John P. Kent, Samuel C. Church, and Amos Hard. Among the younger, such men as William C. Kendall, Loren Stiles, and I. C. Kingsley,—men who, in point of talent, education, and general information—to say nothing of piety—would not suffer in comparison with those who publicly treated them with such contempt. As the reader compares the tone and spirit of this article with "New School Methodism," let him bear in mind that this is one of the more respectable of its class. There were others too low and scurrilous to be republished.

To prove the state of religion among them, we have given their own testimony.

To show the character of the religion thus

denounced, we call attention to the following testimony of ministers in good, and some of them in high standing in other Conferences of the M. E. Church.

We give first a report published in the *Northern Christian Advocate*, written by the Rev. William Reddy, who, for many years, was a presiding elder in the Oneida Conference. The Bergen Camp Meeting was considered by our opposers the most objectionable of all our meetings. Some of them called it the "hot-bed of fanaticism." The meeting here referred to, was held the spring before we were expelled.

"THE BERGEN CAMP-MEETING.

"There were one hundred and four tents on the ground, in a delightful woods owned by the Association, and which may be very much improved with a little outlay. God was there. I believed, I felt he was there; and many were the living witnesses of his power to save, not only to forgive, but also to cleanse from all unrighteousness. I heard old Methodists from Boston and from Connecticut say, with streaming eyes and bounding hearts, "This is as it used to be forty years ago." I regretted much that I did not see Brothers Stiles and Abell, who had left the ground to attend the examinations at Lima, the former to deliver an address before one of the societies, and the other as a trustee. I confess that I felt my heart strongly united with these "fellow-citizens of the saints, and of the household of God." The doctrine of sanctification after the John Wesley standard, the definite

way of seeking the blessing, the spontaneous confessions of having obtained it, on the part of intelligent and mature persons, the duty of exemplifying it by self-denial and universal obedience, the keeping the rules of the Discipline, "not for wrath, but conscience' sake," the patient and loving endurance of opposition and persecution for Christ's sake, if need be, were all earnestly taught and enforced, and many were the witnesses. And some of "the priests [ministers] were obedient to the faith," i. e.; they were wonderfully blest and baptized.

I learned that quite a large number were converted. I left Brother Ives preaching, while Brother Gorham of the Wyoming Conference, was to exhort after him.

AUBURN, JUNE 25, 1858. WM. REDDY.

The following account of the same meeting is from the pen of Rev. B. I. Ives, D. D., of the Oneida Conference:

"BERGEN CAMP MEETING.

The meeting was by far the largest that I have ever attended, and is said to have been the largest and best that has ever been held in Western New York. There were a *hundred and four* cloth tents, and many of them were very large, and *all* of them appeared to be well filled. The congregations were large and very attentive all through the meeting. On the Sabbath there must have been at least, five thousand people present, and yet, so far as I could discover or learn, the best of order prevailed, and all appeared anxious to hear the 'words of salvation.'

There were two things connected with this camp-

meeting with which I was particularly impressed. The first was the number of intelligent business and influential men, that were there with their families, tented upon the ground, and who staid all through the meeting, laboring for God and the salvation of souls. This is as it should be.

The second thing that I noticed particularly, was the spirit of prayer and labor for the conversion of sinners, and the sanctification of believers, that was manifested from the very commencement to the close of the meeting. I saw nothing like mere visiting or idling away precious time, which I am sorry to say we sometimes see at camp-meetings. But here all appeared to feel as though they had come for one object—the glory of God and the salvation of souls. So much was this the case that when strangers came upon the ground, they were led to say, as several brethren in the ministry and others did to me, 'God is here. There is power here; there appears to be a stream of holy fire and power encircling this camp-ground.' And so it was. There appeared to rest upon *all*, as they came within the circle of tents, a holy impression that God was there in awful power, to awaken, convert, purify, and save souls. This was realized and felt, not only in the public congregation, and under the preaching of the word, but in the class and prayer-meetings, that were held in the different tents. Such was the power of conviction that rested upon many of the unconverted, that in several instances they came unasked into prayer-meetings, and, weeping, requested the people of God to pray for them. And I can but believe that this would be the case all over our land, if the Church of God were

baptized with holiness and power. Who does not feel like singing,

'O, that it now from heaven might fall!'

There were over thirty different ministers present, to say nothing of the large band of local preachers who were on hand, 'full of faith and the Holy Ghost,' and who had a 'mind to work.' There were several preachers at the camp-meeting from other Conferences, such as Bros. Parker, Gulick, Wood, Wheeler, Brown, Tinkham, of East Genesee, Wm. Reddy, of Oneida, and B. W. Gorham, of Wyoming.

Rev. S. C. Church and Asa Abell, (both ex-presiding elders, I believe) had charge of the meeting, and they both appeared very much at home in that kind of business. The preachers all appeared to vie with each other in trying the most effectually to preach Christ to the people, and of course the blessing and power of God attended their efforts. And not in a single instance were sinners invited to come to the altar and seek the Lord, but what there were more or less that came, and generally a large number.

I left the ground the night before the meeting closed, so that I do not know the probable number that were converted or reclaimed, but there must have been a large number; and no doubt *hundreds* will praise God in eternity, that they attended the Bergen camp-meeing.

I must not stop until I speak of the Love-Feast that was held at eight o'clock on Wednesday morning, which was indeed a 'feast of fat things,' and a time of salvation, power, and glory. I was particularly interested in hearing some of the old veterans of the cross relate their experience, some of which

were the richest I have ever heard; and to see their countenances beam with joy, and lighted with glory, as they would say, 'This makes me think of my conversion. This remimds me of the early days of Methodism in this country. This is such a camp-meeting as we used to have thirty, or forty, or fifty years ago.'

I saw nothing that appeared 'like wild-fire,' or mere 'animal excitement,' during the entire meeting. The motto was: 'order and power.' And all the people of God seemed to be baptized with the real, old-fashioned 'Jerusalem fire.' And I pray God that we may have more of this in all our Churches. Praise God for camp-meetings, and let all the people say, Amen. B. I. IVES.

AUBURN, June 28, 1858.

The next meeting of which we give an account was held on the same ground the next year, the spring following the first expulsions. The writer of this was also a member of the Oneida Conference.

"BERGEN CAMP-MEETING.

We arrived on the ground on Friday morning, (the second day of the meeting) and it seemed that the meeting was farther advanced in interest and power, than some meetings we have attended were, during their last days. It is evident that these persons live nearer to God at home and bring the *real fire* with them. At ten o'clock Bro. Wm. Cooley, preached from Ps. xxiv, 3, 4—a very good sermon. At two P. M., Brother Herrick preached from Matt. xvi. 15.

At seven o'clock Brother Thomas preached from John iii, 9. It was a gospel sermon.

Saturday morning, June 23.

B. T. Roberts preached at ten o'clock. What was remarkable in this sermon, the speaker did not as much as refer to his troubles, but the sweetest and most heavenly spirit seemed to reign through the whole discourse. If he continues to maintain the spirit he now possesses, his foes must all fall powerless at his feet.

Dr. Redfield preached at two P. M. from Matt. v, 16. He showed that the human mind was not capable of concocting a scheme of religion that would meet the demands of our fallen nature. He then argued that sensible men could not be prevailed upon, to embrace a system of religion that did not work in them, and regulate their inward life, as well as the outward man. "Let your light shine," first ; by giving glory to God with your voice. Second, by walking in the highway of holiness.

At four o'clock the Laymen's Convention met.

We did not see anything in their proceedings, but what we could endorse. These laymen are men of intelligence, power and prudence. May God give the church more such all over this land. In the evening A. L. Backus, preached from Rom. v. 1, subject Justification by faith. Sunday morning the writer talked a little from Matt. xxi, 22. Subject, Prevailing Prayer. The Lord helped. At ten o'clock Dr. Redfield preached from Jer. ix, 3. 'They are not valiant for the truth.' After this, there were prayer circles formed all over the ground, and the *power of God* was greatly manifested among the people. Per-

fect order reigned, though there were probably 12,000 people on the ground. God's order evidently obtained.

At two o'clock, Rev. B. I. Ives preached from 2 Cor. iv, 4. The glorious Gospel of Christ. Sunday evening, Bro. A. B. Gregg, of the Oneida Conference preached from Jer. vi, 16. At seven o'clock, Bro. C. D. Brooks, of the Indian Mission preached on the Gospel Feast. The Lord evidently reigned over the great congregation during this day. Notwithstanding the great mass of people present, perfect order prevailed during the whole day.

Monday morning, Bro. Purdy took for his text Matt. vii, 24–27. He said there were two kinds of people in the world. First, those who hear the words of Christ, believe and do them. Second, those who hear, believe and do not. At two o'clock, Bro. John W. Reddy preached from Phil. iv, 6–7. He preached an excellent sermon. Sister Purdy then spoke of her illness; said she realized more than ever, that the rules of the M. E. Church were barely strict enough to get us to heaven. In the evening, Bro. Watts preached from 'Now is the accepted time.' It was a good sermon.

Tuesday morning, at ten o'clock, Bro. Selby of the East Genesee Conference preached from Lev. xx, 7.

Wednesday, Bro. Wm. Reddy preached on the baptism of the Holy Ghost.—Matt. iii, 11–12.

This meeting was one of the strongest we ever attended. We had heard so much about this people, that when we went on the ground, for a little while we were on the *come and see bench*, but we soon found

that these persons had nothing but what a *few* of our people have in the Oneida Conference. They are a people full of faith, and when they pray, they look for immediate results. They are as intelligent a class of people as you will find in any congregation in the State of New York. They are clear in their views of holiness, according to our standard authors, and according to Scripture. We want to be identified with the principles and doctrines held by this much persecuted people. If there is any shame connected with them as long as they stand where they *now do*, we want to bear our part.

MARATHON, July 15. J. F. CRAWFORD.

The Black Creek camp-meeting of which the following accounts were published, was held the same year:

"LAYMEN'S CAMP MEETING.

I have lately attended a Layman's camp-meeting, which was held near Belfast, Allegany Co., N. Y., ably conducted by Rev. C. D. Burlingham. I sat under the preaching of Rev. B. T. Roberts and Rev. J. McCreery, who are charged with fanaticism and enthusiasm. They are in earnest to have the Church gain heaven, and seek full salvation from all sin. These men are blessed of God. I arrived on the camp-ground Sunday evening. The stars shone brightly on the smiling earth; the voice of prayer rang with music from the leafy temple; a flood of celestial light came down from heaven; the spirit of praise inspired each Christian with the fullness of divine melody; a solemn awe pervaded the hearts of the people; a voice from heaven spake to the impeni-

tent, and rent the vale of sin. Scores were reclaimed and converted to God. Great and powerful manifestations were made. These men of God were conformed in their instructions to the wisdom of God, which flowed down upon them like a golden stream of light from heaven. They were animated by inspiring love, while thousands of the assembly were inspired with confidence in the preaching of *Eldad* and *Medad*. Swelling raptures burst forth and filled the leafy edifice with songs of universal love. 'Shall they prevail in the combat of evil elements?' In spite of all opposition, and the secret combinations of men, '*They shall prevail.*' Jesus says, 'Fear not, I am with you.' IRA A. WEAVER,

PHILLIPSVILLE, July 25, 1859. A Wesleyan."

The following is by a local preacher from the city of New York:

"OLD FASHIONED METHODISM.

The above is the most proper name I know of to give to the preaching, and exhortations and exercises I heard and saw at a camp-meeting which commenced on the sixth and closed on the thirteenth of this month, near Black Creek, in Western New York, and also at a meeting in Bergen, N. Y., which commenced on the twenty-third of last month. I attended both meetings, and heard the blessing of entire sanctification preached and enforced as it used to be by Wilbur Fisk, B. C. Eastman, A. D. Merrill, Asa Kent and others of the old time. Perfect order was observed, and the wicked, as they came on the ground with their large cudgels, seemed to be awed into reverence by the power of the Spirit

which prevailed. Many found the Saviour, some of whom told us they came to make fun, but God answered prayer, and convicted and converted them; and many heeded the warm invitations of God's servants, and sought and found full redemption in the blood of the Lamb. Oh ! that the religion of western New York may spread over these lands.

J. PALMER.

The following account of another layman's camp-meeting, was written by a preacher from, we believe, the Philadelphia Conference.

"MAMMOTH CAMP-MEETING.

Sept. 2nd 1858. We arrived at Gasport about one o'clock, and took private conveyance to the great, mammoth camp-meeting, about two miles from the depot. This meeting had commenced the day previous, and was in Niagara County, about twenty-five miles from Niagara Falls. Some sixty or seventy tents were pitched on the ground, which has a fine elevation, and is finely shaded with beautiful sugar maple and highland oak.

I had the pleasure of introductions to numerous brethren, and spent some profitable moments with Bros. Roberts, McCreery and Jenkins, and also Bro. Johnson of the Wesleyan connection.

The preaching of the brethren was eminently experimental and practical. Prayer, praise and shoutings were heard from every part of the ground. On Sabbath it was supposed that ten thousand persons were on the ground. I saw no rowdyism during the meeting. I was surprised to learn that camp-meetings were a new thing in that immediate neighbor-

hood. On Sabbath morning, after Brother Roberts had concluded his sermon, Miss Hardy, a member of our church, and a graduate of Genesee College, arose and delivered an affecting exhortation, before the vast auditory. I am glad to see this feature of Methodism revived among us. When Methodism was young and vigorous, we had female class-leaders and exhorters. Brother Ives preached in the afternoon, and notwithstanding the strong wind, his splendid, camp-meeting voice arrested the attention of thousands. On Monday morning we left for Niagara Falls, and the meeting was to continue till Wednesday. I have not heard the final result; but no doubt it was glorious. J. D. LONG."

While the Conference was in session at Brockport, in October 1859, Fay H. Purdy held a Camp-Meeting in a meadow a short distance north of the village. The following account of the meeting was given in the Brockport paper.

"CAMP-MEETING.

The services of the camp-meeting continue of the most interesting character. The spacious pavilion is crowded with attentive thousands, listening with eagerness to the heart-stirring appeals made by the ambassadors of Christ. The altar is crowded with weeping penitents at nearly every service. The number of converts we have been unable to ascertain, but we presume the conditions of Mr. Purdy's pledge will be more than met,—that if one hundred souls were converted, he should feel it his duty to appoint a similar meeting at the Conference next

year. Mr. Thurston continues to labor with the ability, fervor and success, that have marked all his efforts while he has been at this meeting. He seems more free and powerful and honored of God since that noble stand he took in reference to the Bishop's interference with his labors here. The Bishop peremptorily ordered him to leave the meeting, and not participate in these services. This prelatical assumption of power was met with the manly independence that it richly merited. Rev. Mr. Whitney, of the Troy Conference, made, at different times, some of the most solemn, moving appeals to the hearts and consciences of men, that we have ever listened to. He is in feeble health, and looks like one sent from the grave to warn the living to prepare for judgment. The services on Sabbath morning commenced with a love-feast, which reminded the aged of the Methodist love-feasts of by-gone years. At half past ten, Rev. Wm. Hosmer, Editor of the *Northern Independent*, preached to a congregation of from six to eight thousand people, a most eloquent and impressive discourse from the text, 'Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness.' Every sentence was a proverb. He is a noble specimen of a Christian man, original, sincere, fearless, and full of faith in God. At the close of the service, Mr. Purdy said 'he was about to make an announcement that no one but himself was cognizant of. He said he never shrunk from responsibility, when God spoke to him. He felt that his duty was clear, and he now offered the platform to B. T. Roberts, an expelled member of the Genesee Conference, to proclaim salvation to the people in the afternoon. He hoped no one would

come who believed him to be a bad man.' At two P. M., the spacious tent was crowded to its utmost capacity, and Mr. Roberts preached an evangelical discourse from 'Son of man, I have made thee a watchman.'

In the evening the Rev. Mr. Thurston again preached an overwhelming sermon from "Ye must be born again." The tent was crowded, and a deep solemnity pervaded the entire mass of human beings. Some forty, we should judge came forward as seekers of salvation. Mr. Purdy, who has no equal in the management of such meetings, remarked at the close, that the law of order had prevailed with but slight exceptions—who the exceptions were he would not now say, but would say that they were not *common sinners.* The congregation was dismissed, and retired quietly from the ground, carrying impressions that will not soon be forgotten. At 10 A. M., Dr.* Palmer, of New York City, preached with unction and power. In the afternoon, Rev. Mr. ——, of the East Genesee Conference, preached a powerful sermon from "Be not weary in well doing." He was followed by exhortations by Rev. Mr. Wells and the Rev. L. Stiles of the Genesee Conference. A prayer meeting followed—the altar was filled with penitents —the praying continued till a late hour, and a large number professedly passed from death unto life.

On Tuesday, Rev. Mr. Foster, of the Oneida Conference, preached an able sermon full of power. The sacrament of the Lord's Supper was administered to between four and five hundred. The scene was affecting to all who beheld it. The concluding ser-

*Not the well-known physician, but a local preacher.

vices on Wednesday morning were most solemn and impressive. After a love feast such as we have never been in before, the multitude of believers marched around the area embraced within the circle of tents and took the parting hand, never all to meet again till they meet at the judgment seat."

We next give an account of the DEDICATION of the Free Methodist Church at Albion.

A correspondent of the *Buffalo Advocate* wrote:

"The services of the dedication were conducted by Rev. Asa Abell, one of the fathers of the Genesee Conference, who made the opening prayer; the reading of the Scriptures by Rev. Mr. Requa, of the Wisconsin Conference, a sermon from the celebrated Dr. Bowen of the Oneida Conference, after which the dedicatory prayer was made by Mr. Ives, who particularly thanked God for stirring up the people to build a free house of worship, and implored his special blessing upon the various portions of the house, including its fixtures, then and there consecrated to him."

The *Buffalo Morning Express* published the following account of these services:

"We rejoice in every provision that is made for preaching the Gospel to the masses. The tendency of the exclusive system upon which most of the churches in the cities and large towns in Western New York are conducted, is to alienate the masses from religious worship. In a church where a few have their pews which they occupy, as a right, the

many will not feel like intruding, nor will they consent to advertise their poverty, from Sabbath to Sabbath, by occupying seats reserved for the poor. Hence, we are glad to chronicle the success which has crowned the efforts to build a Free Church in Albion. The Rev. L. Stiles, who, with others, were expelled by the Genesee Conference, at its last session, for doing his duty as a Christian minister, was invited by the great majority of the church at Albion, which he had served with great acceptability for the two previous years, to continue his labors among them, as a minister of Jesus Christ, and he accepted the invitation. Rather than have any disturbance, they gave up the church property, to which they were legally entitled, and proceeded at once to purchase a lot, and erect a house of worship. This house was yesterday dedicated to the worship of God by the Rev. E. Bowen, D. D., of the Oneida Conference, of the M. E. Church. His sermon, on holiness, founded upon 1 Cor. vi, 2: "For ye are bought with a price," etc., was most able, impressive, and made a profound impression upon the vast congregation in attendance. In the evening, the Rev. B. I. Ives delivered one of his powerful appeals from the words: "We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you." The thrilling shouts of the people showed that the truth fell upon ears capable of appreciating it. The house was crowded to its utmost; some 1300 being present, and many left, unable to get in. The house thus dedicated, is a substantial structure, 101 feet by 55. The audience room—the largest in the place—pleasant and commodious, will seat about one thousand persons. A basement, the whole size of the

building, entirely above ground, affords pleasant and convenient rooms for class and prayer meetings, and Sabbath-school. The lecture room in the basement will hold six hundred persons. The house is plainly and neatly furnished, and lighted with gas. The cost of the whole has been in round numbers about $10,000. The whole has been paid or provided for. About $4,500 were raised yesterday and last evening. For this result, credit is due to Rev. B. I. Ives, through whose indefatigable exertion, the whole amount called for was secured. Mr. Stiles has collected a large and intelligent congregation, a devoted, pious, working church, and with their present facilities for doing good, the best results may be anticipated. The meeting was continued over the Sabbath, the Rev. B. I. Ives preaching with more than his usual power. The sacrament was administered to some four hundred or more communicants, and the season was one long to be remembered. In the evening, the altar was filled with penitents."

The following is an account of the first General Quarterly Meeting held in the Free Methodist Church at Albion. It was written by Rev. George Fox, who was at that time a member of the Wisconsin Conference of the M. E. Church; but who afterwards united with the Free Methodists, and after laboring among them a few years with great zeal and success, died in holy triumph.

"The exercises of the General Quarterly Meeting, from beginning to end, were attended with the divine

presence and glory. The scene of the Sabbath, no human tongue or pen can describe; and the effort we here attempt, is but a feeble one. Let the imagination of the reader be brought up to its highest point; and then but a faint idea, can be formed of the glorious scene.

At nine o'clock, the hour for Love-Feast to commence, there were together not less than a thousand, plainly dressed, and methodistical appearing persons, anxious to catch the first accent of testimony that might be given, in favor of him who gave his life for all. The testimonies given in that Love-Feast, were not the jingling of old rusty coppers of past experience, but the ring of the gold of present communion with God.

Oh! how my faith in the divinity of our holy religion was increased, as I heard many of my old classmates, and many that had been converted since I left that country, testify that the blood of Christ, was all powerful to cleanse from all sin. I may be considered "wild, or simple as a child," but I did get blessed in love-feast, AND IT HAS FEASTED ME ALL THE WAY TO WISCONSIN.

Brother Ives preached at ten and one-half. The sermon was a masterly effort; his thoughts were brilliant, his manner pleasing, and his language eloquent. It was taken down by a reporter, for one of the Albion dailies, but I think he failed to report the glory part of it.

I do not understand why it should be a crime in some countries to serve God, get happy, and shout God's praises.

The sacrament of the Lord's Supper was adminis-

tered to four hundred and forty persons, while the bright glory of Him, whose death we there celebrated was present, to encourage, sustain and happify.

Brother Ives preached in the evening, and at the close of the sermon, invited such as were sinners and felt their need of a Saviour, to the altar. Fourteen weeping penitents came forward, and in answer to prayer, God came down, and honored the new Church by clearly converting to himself precious souls.

Let me say in conclusion, much has been said in the west in regard to the Genesee Conference "Nazarites." Now, Brother Hosmer, I have seen for myself, and I can exclaim as one did after being permitted to look upon Solomon's glory and splendor 'that half was never told me.' I have met tried friends of former years, heard them relate, with tearful eyes, their trials; I have worshiped with them, and I find my sympathies moved in behalf of the oppressed ones within the bounds of the Genesee Conference. When that Sister told me that her husband's dying request was that Rev. B. T. Roberts should preach his funeral sermon, and because of complying with that request, his funeral could not be attended in the church, although he had paid his money to erect it, and to support the cause of Methodism in that place; and when I heard devoted Christian brethren (acquaintances of other years) tell of being read out of the church without being tried, and without their consent, I could but say, 'God deliver us from such ecclesiastical usurpation.'

G. H. Fox".

Asa Abell said in the *Northern Independent*,

March 10, 1859, in reference to the charge of fanaticism:

"I have been a member of the M. E. Church for over forty-three years, and an unworthy preacher of the Gospel for nearly or quite forty years, and whether I do or not, I am sure I ought to know what is that form of Christianity called Methodism; and although the pressure which some have felt upon them from the strange and unhappy circumstances existing among us for several years past, has, as I have thought, unfavorably modified, in a few instances, (but so far as I recollect, in a comparatively slight degree,) the spirit manifested by some, yet am I constrained to declare that to my apprehension, there is nothing among us where I am acquainted, which justifies the charge of a new type of Methodism. I regard the charge as false and unkind, unless beyond the limit of my acquaintance, sentiments are held and acted on, very different from any I know of. I desire, while God lends me breath, to do what—with my feeble powers I can do—to preserve undegenerate and in full force and virtue the true Wesleyan views of *Christian doctrine, experience and practice,* and help propagate the same as extensively as may be among mankind.

I know of no *ecclesiastical political* designs. If any persons have such designs they have not seen fit to entrust them to me. I have often been associated with those who I suppose are meant in the charges, to have such designs, and I cannot call to mind any expression looking in that direction. I think the one grand design of these earnest people, preachers and others, is to spread vital religion among man-

kind—that is a real, not a diluted and powerless Christianity."

Men of God from a distance, seeing so much published in the papers against us, came to suspect that the cry of "fanaticism" was only a new form of the old opposition to vital godliness, and many came among us to see and hear for themselves. Thus the venerable DR. ELLIOTT, author of "Elliott on Romanism," though an entire stranger, came on purpose to see us and attend our meetings. He spent several days with us, in our family, and gave the work his most hearty, public endorsement; and helped it on by preaching and exhorting in the demonstration of the Spirit.

Thus we have given the testimony of disinterested men respecting what Bishop Simpson calls a "spirit of wild fanaticism." These men were intelligent; most of them ministers, and some of them ministers of high standing in the M. E. Church. Which are to be believed—these men—eye and ear-witnesses of what they wrote; or Bishop Simpson's translation into respectable language of the false accusations of our bitterest enemies?

CHAPTER VII.

CHURCH TRIALS.

The old method of settling religious disputes was, for the stronger party to burn the weaker at the stake, or throw him to the wild beasts. Persecution was one among the practices of heathenism which Constantine brought with him into the Christian church.

Through the influence of Christianity, the spirit of persecution has been restrained to such manifestations, as slanderous reports, social ostracism, and expulsion from the church. But the spirit is the same in all ages.

The first of the partisan trials in the Genesee Conference that took place, was that of the Rev. Joseph McCreery. He was a man of great originality, remarkable talents, and at that time deeply devoted to God. He was quiet in his manner in the pulpit, but we have seen, under his preaching, large congregations stirred to the highest pitch of excitement. He had a way of his own, of saying things, so that the people both understood and remembered them. Under his labors occured extensive and thorough revivals of religion. His father was a Methodist preacher; Dr. Samuel Luckey was his un-

cle, and he prided himself on his Methodist lineage. We never knew a more devoted adherent of the M. E. Church. His course reminds us of an Irish girl, whom her Catholic mother had driven from home, because she had been among the Methodists, and become converted.

The girl had found a place as servant in a pious family by which we were entertained, during a session of Conference. The mother came to the house one morning, and poured upon the poor girl such a torrent of abusive eloquence, as we never heard equaled. Becoming intolerable, the gentleman of the house gently put her out. She then went to the gate, and hurled back anathemas and excecrations, until, overcome by her rage, she fell in a swoon. The daughter rushed out, bathed her temples, wept over her, and became almost frantic with grief. As we endeavored to console her, she said, with a depth of feeling seldom witnessed, "She is my mother, let her do what she will."

So Joseph McCreery said of the M. E. Church. When turned out on the most trivial accusation, he joined again on probation. When he was dropped, because of the clamor raised by his enemies; and the Free Methodist Church was organized by those with whom he had labored to promote Methodism, he refused

for five years to join, and when at last he did unite, such were his yearnings for the old church, that he left the Conference in about two years, and went away to the frontier.

In 1854–5, he was stationed on the Lyndonville circuit. The church was very much run down in spirituality, and he went to work in earnest for its recovery. He read and explained to the society the General Rules. He said he did not wish to take advantage of the ignorance of any one, as some might not have known what they were doing when they joined the M. E. Church. He would therefore give those who did not wish to be governed by these rules, an opportunity to quietly withdraw. None left, but all pledged themselves to keep the rules. He broke up the choir—or as he expressed it—"Drove out the doves who were billing and cooing in the gallery," and introduced congregational singing. He preached with fervor; so great was the interest, that even when the snow-banks were higher than the fences, the people came for miles to attend the meetings. A great revival took place.

Dr. Chamberlain, a superannuated preacher, had his residence on a farm in this circuit. He was a strong man, of a metaphysical turn of mind, cold temperament, and undemonstrative in his manners. He was an advocate of the

"gradual" theory of holiness. Encouraged by large appropriations from the superannuated fund, he suffered himself to be made prominent by the dominant party in Genesee Conference, in their open attacks upon those they called "Nazarites." His zeal was also quickened by the fact, that his wife, a noble woman, of strong mind, and deep, uniform piety, openly, avowedly, and very decidedly, identified herself with those who were proscribed, as "Nazarites," and afterwards expelled.

During the year that the Rev. Mr. McCreery was on the circuit in which Dr. Chamberlain resided, the doctor wrote down a long list of the odd, characteristic expressions, which Mr McCreery had uttered in the pulpit.

As a specimen of Mr. McCreery's sayings, we give the following. In describing church festivals then in vogue, he said: "A whiskered and blanketed black-leg will come along, and pay his quarter for the privilege of fishing a rag-baby from a grab bag."

In stating the opposition he met with in trying to bring the church back to its former simplicity and spirituality, he said: "Some of the younger boys have taken my mother, the Methodist Church, in her old age, painted her face and curled her hair, hooped her, and flounced her, and jeweled her, and fixed her up, until

we could hardly tell her from a woman of the world. Now when I have taken the old lady, and washed her face, and straightened out her hair, and dressed her up in modest apparel, so that she looks like herself again, they make a great hue and cry, and call it abusing mother."

Dr. Chamberlain read to the following Conference, the sayings to which he objected, and arrested the character of the Rev. Joseph McCreery. The latter read to the Conference, the "Nazarite Documents," and his character was passed, subject to an examination before his presiding elder, of any charges which might be preferred against him. The Rev. Loren Stiles was his presiding elder, and when the charges were presented, he ordered the trial to be held at Lyndonville, where the alleged offences were committed, and where the witnesses lived, though it was outside of his district. At the opening of the trial, the prosecution objected to the ruling of the chairman, and refusing to go on, the trial was abruptly brought to a close.

At the next Conference, at Medina, charges were brought against Loren Stiles for his administration in this case.

They were prosecuted by Thomas Carlton, and James M. Fuller. At the request of broth-

er Stiles, we acted as his counsel, and Mr. Stiles was acquitted.

The so-called "regency," up to this time had control of only two, out of the five presiding elderships, and as they had only about thirty preachers in their secret meetings, they could not control enough votes to secure his conviction. They however, as we have stated, by threats made to the Bishop, succeeded in getting both Mr. Stiles, and Mr. Kingsley, removed from the presiding eldership, and men of their own appointed in there places. At their own request, Bros. Stiles and Kingsley were trans ferred to the Cincinnati Conference. The charges against Rev. J. McCreery were withdrawn, and resolutions reflecting upon him, adopted in place of a conviction.

Complaints of a serious character were made against three of the prominent preachers of the so-called regency party of the Genesee Conference of the M. E. Church.

One of these complaints was as follows:

Enoch Pease, an old Methodist of Niagara County, had lent these preachers about one thousand dollars. They gave him for security, what they said was a first mortgage, duly recorded, upon a piece of real estate which they claimed to own, at Lima, N. Y. He let the mortgage run till it was due. The parties

meanwhile, had failed. On the suit for foreclosure, it was shown that they had bought this property of Dr. T. They paid down only a nominal sum, and gave back a mortgage for the purchase money. At the time of the purchase, Mrs. T. was away from home. The deed and mortgage were both left with the lawyer who drew them up, until Mrs. T. could sign the deed, and then both deed and mortgage were to be recorded together. While these papers thus laid *in escrow*, this mortgage was executed to Enoch Pease. *He never got his money.* These men might not have known which mortgage would hold—but they did know that they had given to one or the other of the parties with whom they were dealing, a worthless security. As soon as the complaints were brought before the Conference, one of the leading men of their party, I think it was T. Carlton, moved to lay the whole matter on the table. It was seconded and carried, and there it still lies.

With the guilt of the parties we have nothing to do ; but we do hold that the Conference which refused to investigate such complaints, made by such a man as Enoch Pease,—in such a manner—for we took his affidavit of the facts in the case, WAS GUILTY OF COVERING UP FRAUD !

Another case is as follows: The same firm, consisting of these three prominent preachers, again wished to borrow money. One of them took a note which the three had signed, to Geneseo to borrow five hundred dollars, of a brother White, a Methodist man, who kept a private bank there. Being strangers to him, he took the note to his pastor, the Rev. Jonathan Watts, of the East Genesee Conference, and asked his advice. Mr. Watts told him that he supposed the men whose names were on the note were honest, they were Methodist preachers in good standing, and ought to be, but he knew nothing of their financial responsibility. "But," said he, "the father-in-law of one of them,—Dr. B., I know to be a man of means; if he indorses their note, it will be safe." Mr. White took the note back to this preacher, and told him if he would get Dr. B. to indorse it, he would himself endorse it and go to another bank and get the money for them, as he had no money on hand, and would like to accommodate them. The preacher returned the next day with the note endorsed with the name of the Doctor. Mr. White endorsed it, and got them the money on it. The note when due was protested, and Brother White looked to his endorser, Dr. B., for the pay; but instead of him, the Doctor's son, who was financially

irresponsible, at their request had signed the note! The note and costs amounted to six hundred dollars, and not a cent was ever paid to Brother White. Soon after, he failed in business, and was reduced to want. He requested Mr. Watts to see one of these preachers, and ask him, as he was getting a good salary, as pastor of one of the leading churches, to pay his proportion or a part of it, to relieve his pressing necessities. *This*, he utterly refused to do. Rev. Mr. Watts sent Brother White money at the time, to keep him and his family from starvation.

We made complaint of this fraudulent transaction, to the Conference, backed up by the statement of Rev. J. Watts, in substance as here given. The complaint *was promptly laid upon the table.*

Why did not the victims of such dishonesty prosecute these preachers in a criminal court? Enoch Pease was an old man, wealthy, and did not want the trouble of a prosecution, as he knew he could not get back his money. He was a devoted Methodist, and did not want the church disgraced.

Mr. White got the preacher who negotiated the note with him indicted, and the preacher fled the state. He joined a Conference west, and was, the last we knew of him, a regular

preacher in good standing, in the M. E. Church.

At this same session, the Rev. L. Stiles stated to the Conference that he had letters, written by men of good standing in the community, two of them members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, calling in question the business integrity and honesty of a member of the Conference. He asked that a committee might be appointed, to whom these letters might be referred for such action as the committee might deem proper. *But the Conference refused to appoint the committee, or even to hear the letters!*

The so-called regency party now became desperate in their measures. The question between the two parties had, to some of the leaders of one of these parties, become a question of life and death.

Their desperation increased when they found at the next Conference, that the Rev. Messrs. Stiles and Kingsley, in accordance with petitions signed by over fifteen hundred of the members, had been re-transferred to the Conference.

They saw that something must be done to cripple our influence, or they were still in danger of being called to account for their misdeeds. They hired a hall, and without ever

being suspected, held secret meetings at night. They had now control of the presiding elders, and by letting the young, and the unacceptable preachers understand that their appointments depended upon which party in the Conference they identified themselves with, they succeeded in getting a majority of the Conference into these secret meetings. Then they voted, IN THIS SECRET CONCLAVE, composed of the men who were to sit upon the jury, and whose votes were relied upon in advance to secure conviction, to bring charges against B. T. Roberts and W. C. Kendall!

My article on "New School Methodism," had just been published, and the charges against me were based on that.

I arose in Conference, and said: "I have no intention to misrepresent any one. I do not think I have. I honestly think that the men referred to, hold just the opinions I say they do. But if they do not, I shall be glad to be corrected. If they will say they do not, I will take their word for it, make my humble confession, and, as far as possible, repair the wrong that I have done. I will publish in the *Northern Independent*, and in all the church papers they desire me to, from Maine to California, that I have misrepresented them."

But no one said that I had misrepresented

them. They had been at great pains to get their majority, and now they must use it. As one of the preachers said, "*Nazaritism must be crushed out, and we have got the tools to do it with!*"

They went on with the trial. There was little to do, as I admitted that I wrote the article. In my defense I showed:

1. That it is an undisputed principle of common law, that in all actions for libel, the precise language complained of as libelous, must be set forth in the indictment.

"An indictment for libel must set forth the very words; it is not sufficient to aver that the defendant published a certain libel, the substance of which is as follows."—*Brightley's Digest, Vol. II, page 1631.*

"In an action for libel, the law requires the very words of the libel to be set out, in order that the court may judge whether they constitute a good ground of action.—*Sergent & Rowlin's Reports, Vol. X, page 174.*

2. That if you make a man responsible for the construction which his enemies put upon his words, you might condemn any man that ever wrote. Nay, you could on that principle, condemn the Saviour himself. He said that "All that came before me were thieves and robbers." Noah, Job and Daniel came before him. Therefore he slandered Noah,

Job and Daniel, by calling them *thieves and robbers*. In fact our Saviour was condemned for the construction which his enemies put upon his words.

3. I showed that in all the important specifications they not only had not given my words; but they had perverted my meaning. I claim the ability to say what I mean. That the contrast between their charges and my words may be the more easily seen, we give both in parallel columns:

CHARGES AGAINST REV. B. T. ROBERTS.	WHAT HE DID SAY.
I hereby charge Rev. B. T. Roberts with unchristian and immoral conduct.	
1st. In publishing in the "Northern Independent" that there exists in the Genesee Conference an associate body numbering about thirty, whose teaching is very different from that of the fathers of Methodism.	1st. Already there is springing up among us a class of preachers whose teaching is very different from that of the fathers of Methodism. They may be found here and there throughout our Zion; but in the Genesee Conference they act as an associate body. They number about thirty.
2d. In publishing as above that said members of Genesee Conference are opposed to what is fundamental in Christianity—to the nature itself of Christianity.	2d. This difference is fundamental. It does not relate to things indifferent, but to those of the most vital importance. It involves nothing less than the nature of Christianity itself.
3d. In classing them in the above-mentioned publication with Theodore Parker and Mr. Newman as regards laxness of religious sentiment.	3d. The New School Methodists affect as great a degre of liberalism as do Theodore Parker and Mr. Newman.
4th. In charging them, as above, with sneering at Christianity in a manner not unworthy of Thomas Paine, and that falls below that of Voltaire.	4th. The following sneer is not unworthy of Thomas Paine himself. It falls below the dignity of Voltaire.

5th. In charging them, as above, with being heterodox on the subject of holiness.

5th. The New School Methodists hold that justification and entire sanctification, or "holiness," are the same—that when a sinner is pardoned, he is at the same time made holy—that all the spiritual change he may henceforth expect is simply a growth in grace. When they speak of "holiness," they mean by it the same as do evangelical ministers of those denominations which do not receive the doctrines taught by Wesley and Fletcher on this subject.

6th. In asserting that they acknowledge that their doctrines are not the doctrines of the church; and that they have undertaken to correct the teachings of her standard authors.

6th. The New School ministers have the frankness to acknowledge that their doctrines are not the doctrines of the church. They have undertaken to correct the teachings of her standard authors. In the same editorial of "The Advocate," from which we have quoted so largely, we read: "So in the exercises and means of grace instituted by the church, it is clearly apparent that respect is had, rather to the excitation of religious sensibilities and the culture of emotional piety, than the development of genial and humane dispositions, and the formation of habits of active, vigorous goodness."

7th. In charging them as above, with attempting to abolish the means of grace—substituting the lodge for the class-meeting and love-feast, and the social party for the prayer-meeting.

7th. The means of grace in the use of which an Asbury, an Olin, a Hedding, and a host of worthies departed and living, were nurtured to spiritual manhood, must be abolished; and others adapted to the "development of genial and humane dispositions," established in their place. The lodge must supercede the class and the love-feast; and the old fashioned prayer-meeting must give way to the social party.

8th. In representing as above, the

8th. The leaders of the new Di-

revivals among them as superficial, and characterizing them as "splendid revivals."

9th. In saying, as above, that they treat with distrust all professions of deep religious experience.

REUBEN C. FOOTE.

LeRoy, Sept. 1st, 1857.

vinity movement are not remarkable for promoting revivals; and those which do occasionally occur among them may generally be characterized as the editor of "The Advocate" designated one which fell under his notice as "splendid revivals." Preachers of the old stamp urge upon all who would gain heaven, the necessity of self-denial — non-conformity to the world; purity of heart, and holiness of life; while the others ridicule singularity, encourage by their silence, and in some cases by their own example, and that of their wives and daughters, "the putting on of gold and costly apparel," and 9th, treat with distrust all professions of deep religious experience.

I explained to them so clearly that the dullest could not fail to see,

1. That men may "*act* as an associate body," who do not "exist as an associate body." It was true that they had a regularly organized "associate body," but I did not know it, or even suspect it, and so I did not say it.

2. That men might have a difference about what is "fundamental,"—about "the nature itself of Christianity," without any of them being "opposed to what is fundamental," or to the nature of Christianity. In point of fact, the Calvinists and the Arminians—the Unitarians and Trinitarians do so differ.

3. That there is a wide difference between

"liberalism," "possessing charity," and "looseness of religious sentiment."

4. That saying "the following sneer is not unworthy of Thomas Paine," is by no means equivalent to saying, "They sneer at Christianity in a manner not unworthy of Thomas Paine."

5. That in saying they mean by "holiness" the same as "evangelical ministers" of the other Protestant churches generally do, is by no means charging them with being "heterodox on the subject of holiness."

6. That the article from which I quote, fully sustains all I say upon the point involved in the sixth specification.

7. That in showing that if certain views of religion prevailed, "the lodge must supercede the class and the love-feasts," I did not charge them with attempting to do it, but that this would be the logical result of the teachings that I was reviewing.

8. That in calling their revivals "splendid revivals," I simply quoted from an editorial of their own organ.

9. That in saying they "treat with distrust all professions of deep, religious experience," I simply told what was notoriously true. I heard one of these preachers say, "When I hear a man profess holiness, I feel for my

pocket-book." Another said, "If I should find Jesse T. Peck's book on "The Central Idea of Christianity," in my house, I would take it with the tongs and throw it into the fire."

Yet with the matter thus plainly before them, a majority of the Conference voted these specifications, (except the 4th, which was withdrawn) sustained. In doing that, every man of them voted as true what *he knew to be false.* We can not come to any other possible conclusion. They were not ignorant men who did not know what they were about. They were not acting hastily over a matter they did not understand. The case was fairly laid before them. *They deliberately voted that I wrote what they knew I did not write.*

I was sentenced to be reproved by the chair. I received the reproof and appealed to the General Conference.

When the appointments were read out I was sent to Pekin, Niagara County. It was about the only part of the Conference in which I was a total stranger. To my knowledge I had never seen a single person belonging to my new charge.

Before I reached my appointment a prominent preacher of the opposite party had taken

pains to inform them that their preacher had been convicted at the Conference of "immoral and unchristian conduct." This was also published *without explanation*, in the *Buffalo Advocate*. Of course the people were hardly willing to receive us. We doubt if any itinerant ever had a colder reception. Even Father Chesbrough, one of the noblest of men, and staunchest and most loyal of Methodists, at first thought he would not even go to hear me preach. "What have we done," he exclaimed, "that a man convicted of immoral conduct should be sent as our preacher?" When the first Sabbath morning that we preached there came, as he always attended church, he concluded to go, saying, "It can do no hurt to hear him once, any way." Returning from church, his son said he rode in silence over a mile and then said, "Well, Sam, I know nothing about the man, but I do know that what we have heard to-day is Methodism as I used to hear it in the old Baltimore Conference, and as I have not heard it preached in western New York."

Soon, a powerful revival of religion broke out, which, notwithstanding the marked indifference of the presiding elder and the open opposition of two or three of the official members, swept on with increasing power through-

out the year. One of the stewards, dissatisfied because the young people were getting converted so thoroughly as to lay aside their jewelry and their finery, while we were holding revival meetings in the church, started prayer-meetings in his house across the street. We paid no attention to them and they soon died a natural death.

Though the district camp-meeting was held but three miles from us, the presiding elder never mentioned the subject to us. But we attended, and, much to his dismay, had one of the largest tents on the ground. For three days he did not once open the way for testimony in any public meetings before the stand, doubtless for fear that some of the Pekin pilgrims would tell what God had done for their souls. At last a sister, free in Jesus, broke through, and the tide of salvation began to run. In the intervals of meetings at the stand we kept them going in our tent, and many were there converted and many sanctified to God. Of the work on the circuit this year, a beloved brother wrote for the *Northern Independent* as follows:

"It can not be denied that we received to our church as our pastor, a man whom *The Advocate* informed us was tried and found guilty of 'immorality;' and judging from the articles which have

appeared from time to time in that paper. it would seem that his opposers think 'if we let him alone, all men will believe on him;' and the only way to destroy his usefulness is to pursue him with 'slanders' and 'persecutions.' A recent article in *The Advocate*, which descends to language unbecoming one Christian speaking of another, is hardly worth noticing, as the shafts hurled at Brother Roberts fall far below him. The statement, however, that he was not returned to Niagara Street Church on account of his unfitness, will do well enough among those who have never heard from Brother Thomas all the facts in the case, which, thank God, there are many who understand as fully as the editor of *The Advocate*, and who dare to tell the whole truth when called upon.

In view, then, of all these things, the grand question to be answered is this: Has the church prospered under his labors, and has God honored his labors by bestowing his blessing upon them? We feel glad to say thatthe church, has prospered, through the blessing of God, during the year. And all the honor and glory we lay at the feet of Jesus, for without him his children can do nothing.

Though we have not been favored during the year with the 'able, impressive and appropriate prayers,' that some of the other churches have been, we feel thankful that we have had 'the effectual, fervent prayers of the righteous man, which availeth much.' Notwithstanding the many reports which have circulated to the contrary, God has been at work among the people. Between fifty and sixty have professed conversion; about forty of whom have joined on probation. The preaching has been plain, simple

and pointed, and in accordance with the doctrines and discipline of the Church. The consequence has been, very many of the members of the Church have been seen at the altar of prayer, some for justification, some for sanctification. Quite a number have publicly professed to have received the blessing of sanctification. Without an exception, every aged member in our Church has rejoiced to see the return of the days of Wesleyan Methodism, with its uncompromising and earnest spirit.

When Brother R. came among us, our Sunday noon class numbered about fifteen; now the average attendance is, and has been for some time, from seventy-five to eighty. Our prayer-meetings and week evening class meetings, and they occur every night in the week at various points on the charge, have been better sustained through 'haying and harvesting,' and have been more interesting than for years past. The Sunday School has also reached a point in attendance and interest never before attained in its history. There are scores in the Church to-day, who feel to thank God for having sent him among us.

S. K. J. CHESBROUGH.

SOUTH PEKIN, Sept. 24, 1858."

CHAPTER VIII.

TWO EXPULSIONS.

Bishop Simpson says in his article on "The Free Methodists," "In 1858, two of the leaders were expelled from the Conference."

Of one of the two men referred to, this is a mistake. Joseph McCreery, though prominent in the holiness movement in the Genesee Conference of the M. E. Church, was never a leader in the Free Methodist Church. He was opposed to the organization. With regard to the penalty, the statement is only half true. The men referred to were expelled, not only "from the Conference," but also "from the Church." Why did not Bishop Simpson tell the whole truth? Was he unwilling to have it appear that the laws of the M. E. Church, *as then administered*, were like the laws of Draco, and punished the slightest offense, or even no offense, with death? Or, worse still, like the edicts of Nero, which tortured men for being Christians?

What heinous offense had been committed, that the highest penalty known to ecclesiastical law was thus inflicted?

At the close of the Le Roy Conference, the

victorious party published far and wide that Brother Roberts had been convicted of "immoral conduct." They left it in this vague manner, intending to convey the impression that he had done something very bad.

George W. Estes was at that time a prominent member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, on the Clarkson circuit. He was a man of intelligence, and of influence in the community in which he resided. He had been an efficient worker in the revival meetings which we held at Brockport, and was alive in religion. With many others, Mr. Estes felt that a great wrong had been done by the Conference, and by the vague, insinuating reports published of the offense for which B. T. Roberts had been convicted.

Mr. Estes, *without my knowledge* even, published over his own name, and at his own expense, in pamphlet form, my article on "New School Methodism," and a short account of my trial. We give Mr. Estes article entire, omitting the charges on which we were tried by the Le Roy Conference, and which may be found in this book, beginning on the 150th page.

"TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.

The foregoing *article in the *Northern Independent*

* Referring to "New School Methodism," page 85.

was made the subject of general consultations in private caucuses of the Buffalo Regency, held in a room over Bryant & Clark's book store, at Le Roy, on Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings of the first week of the Conference; the result of which was the Bill of Charges given below. The manner of committing the feebler of the preachers to the condemnation of Brother Roberts in advance, was on this wise, as related by one present. One of the chiefs of the Regency, acting as chairman, asked: 'What shall be done in the case of Brother Roberts? All in favor of his prosecution raise your hands!' The 'immortal thirty' raised their hands, and a few presiding elderlings. The chairman then delivered a flaming exhortation to unanimity—that they must be united enough *to carry the matter through*, or it would not do to undertake it. After sundry exhortations, the vote was taken again, and a few more voted. After another season of fervent exhortation, a third vote was taken, in which all, save one, concurred; and the trial and condemnation were determined upon. Beautiful work this for godly, Methodist preachers, deriving their support from honest, religious societies among us! We put their Bill of Charges, with all its ingenious distortion of facts, on record here before the people as follows: (See page 150.)

For several years past there has been the annual sacrifice of a human victim at the Conference. It has been a custom. The religious rites and ceremonies attending this annual lustration assume a legal complexion. The victim is immolated according to law. E. Thomas, J. McCreery, I. C. Kingsley, L.

Stiles and B. T. Roberts constitute the 'noble band of martyrs' thus far. Who is selected for the next annual victim is not yet known. The midnight conclave of the 'immortal thirty' has not yet made its selection. No man is safe who dares even whisper a word against this secret Inquisition in our midst.—Common crime can command its indulgences—bankruptcies and adulteries are venal offences—but opposition to its schemes and policies is a 'mortal sin'—a crime 'without benefit of clergy.' The same fifty men who voted Brother Roberts guilty of 'unchristian and immoral conduct' for writing the above article, voted to readmit a Brother from the regions round about Buffalo, for the service performed of kissing a young lady in the vestibule of the Conference room during the progress of Brother Roberts' trial. 'Nero fiddled while the martyrs burned.'

Brother Roberts' trial—if it deserves the name of trial—was marked by gross iniquity of proceedings. There are no regular Church canons in the M. E. Church to govern the specific manner of conducting trials. All is indefinite. A glorious incertitude and independence of all legal regulations prevail. The presidential discretion must of necessity have large latitude and range, either high or low, as prejudice or policy may incline. Thus, when a witness was asked if he knew of a private meeting of about thirty preachers at Medina during Conference; he answered 'Yes.' When asked for what purpose they met, he answered for 'consultation.' Here the prosecution perceiving that all this secret caucusing at the Medina Conference to lock out the prayer meetings, arrange the appointments, oust out presiding elders,

etc., etc., were likely to be brought out, objected to all the questions in the case which were not exactly covered by the verbal terms of the specifications which *they themselves* had artfully framed. And their objections were sustained by the Bishop. Every question as to the meetings of the 'immortal thirty' —their doings and teachings—were objected to and ruled out as irrelevant to the specifications.

Having been charged for affirming the existence of an associate body of about thirty preachers in the Conference for purposes indicated in his article, he was denied to elicit the facts in justification, which he could have proved by thirty witnesses. This right, which any civil or military court would have allowed him, was denied. Of course, where witnesses refuse to testify, and the judge refuses to compel them to do so, there was no use wasting time in defense. Brother Roberts refused to continue the defense.

Also a commission to take testimony was sent to Buffalo. But when they arrived they found an emissary from the Conference had been sent on before them to take charge of the *Advocate* office, who refused to sell or lend, or suffer to be transcribed, any of the copy of the papers or articles bearing on the case, and who put everybody 'on the square' to refuse testimony. Having no power to compel witnesses to testify, the Committee returned with such testimony only, as honest men voluntarily offered; which will be hereafter published.

A venerable Doctor of Divinity read the 'auto-da-fe' sermon, (prepared for the victim of the previous year) wherein he consigned, in true inquisitorial style, Brother Roberts, body and soul, to hell. This

was done in his most masterly manner, evincing no embarrassing amount of idiosyncracy or other mental cause for superannuation. This venerable D. D., though nominally superannuated, and an annual claimant of high rate upon the Conference funds, is nevertheless quite efficient in embarrassing effective preachers in their work, by concocting 'bills of information' and 'bills of charges;' and pleading them to hell for the crime of preaching and writing the truth. Whether his plea will enhance the amount of the superannuated collections for the coming year remains to be seen.

It was moved that the vote in Brother Robert's case should be taken by the yeas and nays; but the same spirit of concealment and dread of light, fostered by secret society associations, prevailed here also. Like some in the olden time, they "feared the people," and voted down the motion. The vote to sustain the charge of "unchristian and immoral conduct," for writing and publishing these strictures on New School Methodism, was *fifty-two* to *forty-three;* being a majority of nine. Several members of Conference were absent, and several dodged through fear of the presiding elder influence upon their appointments.

The following preachers, as near as can be ascertained, voted to sustain the charge: I. Chamberlayne, G. Lanning, E. C. Sanborn, H. May, D. Nichols, M. Seager, R. C. Foote, G. Fillmore, A. D. Wilbor, P. Woodworth, R. L. Waite, H. Butlin, S. M. Hopkins, E. E. Chambers, G. W. Terry, J. Latham, H. W. Annis, Z. Hurd, T. Carlton, J. M. Fuller, W. H. Depuy, D. F. Parsons, S. Hunt, J. B. Lanckton, J.

McEwen, H. R. Smith, S. C. Smith, G. Smith, L. Packard, C. S. Baker, W. S. Tuttle, J. McClelland, J. G. Miller, J. N. Simpkin, S. Y. Hammond, A. P. Ripley, H. M. Ripley, M. W. Ripley, E. L. Newman, A. Plumley, B. F. McNeil, R. S. Moran, E. M. Buck, J. J. Roberts, S. Parker, F. W. Conable, J. B. Wentworth, S. H. Baker, J. Timmerman, K. D. Nettleton, G. Delamater, W. C. Willing.

Another significant fact was apparent in the case; the power of the presiding eldership. Quite a number of preachers would not vote at all. Too honest to aid the conspiracy, and too cowardly to face the "loaves and fishes" argument presented by the presiding elder influence, they sat still and saw the condemnation of the innocent, when they might have prevented it.

The influence of the Book Concern had its effect upon the case. It has become a maxim in politics "that the debtor votes the creditor's ticket." So some indebted to the Concern discreetly refrained from voting at all; while two preachers, having refused to attend the private caucuses of the conspirators, and to pledge themselves in advance to vote for the condemnation of Brother Roberts, were scandalized with a public report of delinquency, in open Conference, by the Book Agent.

But it was the influence of the slavery question which was paramount in the case. The episcopacy is understood to be conservative on that subject, and "to refer to it judiciously in all the chief appointments." Hence the Buffalo regency in these days (notwithstanding high professions lately to the contrary, on the eve of election of delegates to the late

General Conference) is also eminently conservative on that subject; and must needs commend itself to the central episcopal sympathy by great zeal against the *Northern Independent.* Its associate editor in this Conference must be *black-washed* in revenge for the temerity of the people in subscribing for the paper. They could not wreak their vengeance on the people, except by proscribing one acknowledged, above all others in the Conference, to be the PEOPLE'S MAN.

The infamous Brockport Resolutions against the Nazarites, were tacitly endorsed by the Conference in its refusal to entertain the question of official administration involved in their passage. This is their reward for their spaniel loyalty to the *Northern Advocate*, and every other thing that wears the label of "law and order," affixed by a pro-slavery administration. It is stated that two or three Nazarites voted with the Regency against the publication of the slavery report in the *Independent.* Surely it must be true of them, as reported, that they court persecutions and rejoice in being killed off at every Conference. Their strong hold upon the popular mind can not long survive their further blinking the slavery issue. We shall see.

So, brethren in the membership of the Genesee Conference, you see we have a clique among us called the Buffalo Regency—conspiring and acting in secret conclave to kidnap or drive away, or proscribe and destroy, by sham trials, and starvation appointments, every one who has boldness to question their supremacy in the Conference. By threats of insubordination, and farcical outcries of strife and division, they

frighten the episcopacy to give them the presiding-eldership power, with its patronage of appointments, and having that, of course they command the Conference vote, so far as they dare for fear of the people. We are fast losing our best men. The fearless champions of true Methodism are being cloven down, one after another, in our sight; and we sit loyally still, and weep and pray, and pay our money, yet another and another year, hoping the thing will come to an end.

A thousand of us asked the Bishop to rid us of this incubus, which is crushing us into the earth. "We will do the best we can," is the stereotyped reply to our loyal entreaties. How many more victims must be immolated, how many societies must be desolated, while the episcopacy is making up its mind to grapple with this monster power, which is writhing its slimy folds around the church of God, and crushing out its life? The episcopacy, which alone has the power, having failed to redress our grievances and rid us of this unmethodistic and foreign dynasty, there is no remedy but an appeal to personal rights. The remedy of every member is within his own reach. For one, I shall apply that remedy. For me, while looking on those preachers standing to be counted, (no wonder they objected to the yeas and nays) in the vote to condemn Brother Roberts, at LeRoy, I made up my mind that not one of them—preacher, presiding elder or superannuated—should ever receive a cent of my money, on any pretense or by any combination whatsoever. I shall punctually attend church at my own meeting house—prayer meetings, class-meetings, love-feasts, and all the

means of grace; but if one of those men come there to preach—I can't help that—that is not my business. But I shall neither run a step, nor pay a cent. And if, as has been told, all the domestic missionary appropriations in this Conference are varied from year to year—made and withheld to suit the pockets of Regency men appointed to them —this, as long as it continues, will absolve me from obligations to that cause. The same of the superannuated fund, so long as it is controlled by that dynasty: I agreed to support the M. E. Church as a church of the living God; not as the mere adjunct of a secular or political clique. GEO. W. ESTES."

I never saw this article until some time after it was published, and was in no wise responsible for its publication. But Mr. Estes—a man of means, an exhorter in the M. E. Church, was responsible, and like a man, he assumed the responsibility. At the last quarterly conference in the year, the question of the renewal of his license came up. The presiding elder asked George W. Estes if he was the author of that pamphlet? He replied that he was. *Without a word of objection, the presiding elder renewed his license as an exhorter*, and soon after went to Conference, and *voted to expel me from the Conference and the Church*, on the charge of publishing *this very pamphlet.* The following charge was preferred against me:

CHARGES.—I hereby charge Benjamin T. Roberts with unchristian and immoral conduct.

SPECIFICATIONS.

First, Contumacy: In disregarding the admonition of this Conference, in its decision upon his case at its last session.

Second, In re-publishing, or assisting in the re-publishing and circulation of a document, entitled "New School Methodism," the original publication of which had been pronounced by this Conferenee "unchristian and immoral conduct."

Third, In publishing, or assisting in the publication and circulation of a document, printed in Brockport, and signed, "George W. Estes," and appended to the one entitled "New School Methodism," and containing among other libels upon this Conference generally, and upon some of its members particularly, the following, to wit:

1. "For several years past there has been the annual sacrifice of a human victim at the Conference."

2. "No man is safe who dare even whisper a word against this secret inquisition in our midst."

3. "Common crime can command its indulgences; bankruptcies and adulteries are venial offences; but opposition to its schemes and policies is a mortal sin—a crime without benefit of clergy."

4. That "the same fifty men who voted Bro. Roberts guilty of unchristian and immoral conduct, voted to re-admit a brother for the service performed of kissing a young lady."

5. That "Bro. Roberts trial was marked by gross iniquity of proceedings."

6. That "on the trial, a right which any civil or military court would have allowed him, was denied."

7. That "a venerable doctor of Divinity read the "Autodafe" sermon, wherein he consigned in true Inquisitorial style Bro. Roberts body and soul to hell."

8. That "this venerable 'D. D.' is quite efficient in embarrassing effective preachers in their work and pleading them to hell for the crime of preaching and writing the truth."

9. That "there is a clique among us called the Buffalo Regency, conspiring and acting in secret conclave, to kidnap, or drive away, or proscribe and destroy, by sham trials and starvation appointments; every one who has the boldness to question their supremacy in the Conference."

10. That "the fearless champions of Methodism are being cloven down one after another in our sight."

11. That "the aforesaid members of this Conference are a 'monster power,' which is writhing its slimy folds around the Church of God and crushing out its life." Signed, DAVID NICHOLS.

Perry, Oct. 11th, 1858.

Rev. Thomas Carlton and Rev. James M. Fuller acted as counsel against me.

From the threats which had been made, I was satisfied they would seek occasion against me. As a specimen of these threats, I give the following from Rev. S. C. Church, an old presiding elder, and one of those noble-minded masons who felt indignant that masonry should be used to control the affairs of a Conference of ministers. Brother Church wrote:

"During the last session of our Conference, at LeRoy, I was conversing with Rev. H. Ryan Smith, about the remark made by Rev. B. T. Roberts on the floor of the Conference, to the effect that the Committee on Education was packed.

Smith said, "One more such statement will blot Roberts out."

In the same conversation, he said, "You had better take yourself out of the way, or you will be crushed."
CARYVILLE, OCT. 20, 1857. SAMUEL C. CHURCH.

To meet the coming storm, I requested Rev. B. I. Ives, of the Oneida Conference, to act as my counsel; and he was present for that purpose. But the Bishop positively refused to allow it.

As a majority of the Conference claimed to be slandered, in their individual character, and as I knew by this time that they had virtually voted, in their secret meetings, to condemn me, I asked that the trial might be had before another Conference. I quoted to them the wise provision of the civil law:

"The venue may be changed to another county when the defendant conceives that he cannot have a fair and impartial trial in the county where the venue is laid."

I showed them that not one man of the majority would be permitted, under similar circumstances, to sit on a jury in a civil court, if twenty-five cents only were at issue. I quoted:

"If the law says a man shall be a judge in his own cause, such law being contrary to natural equity, shall be void, for *jura naturae sunt immutabilia*; they are *leges legum*. Natural rights are immutable. They are the laws of laws."—*Hobart's Report, page 87, Day vs. Savage.*

I felt that, in a case where my reputation and my standing as a Christian minister—things dearer than life—were at stake, I was entitled to a fair trial.

This request was also refused.

As a last resort to obtain anything like a fair trial, I urged that a committee might be appointed to try the case, as provided for in the Discipline. I told them I would prefer to have it tried by a committee so small that its members would feel a personal responsibility for their action, even if the committee were composed of those who were most strongly committed against me, than to have it go be-

fore the whole Conference, where they could hide behind one another.

This request was also refused.

All this, we know, sounds more like the proceedings of the English "High Commission" in the days of James the Second, and Charles the First, than like the doings of a Conference of Christian ministers, presided over by a godly Bishop, in the nineteenth century. Macaulay says of those commissioners, who covered themselves with infamy, and sent many a godly minister to beggary or to prison: "They were themselves at once prosecutors and judges."

But the facts that we here relate have never been called in question.

Under these circumstances, the trial proceeded. My friend, Loren Stiles, assisted me most heartily, and made an eloquent plea in my defense.

The prosecution did not make the slightest effort to prove that the Estes pamphlet was slanderous, or that its statements were untrue. To do this was a task from which they shrunk. It was easier to take it for granted. So at the outset it was assumed that the pamphlet, *the avowed author of which was still an official member* of the M. E. Church, was so wicked in its character, that to aid in its circulation was a mortal offense.

The prosecution secured the attendance of the printer who issued the Estes pamphlet, though he had to go about seventy miles across the country to get to and from the Conference. But when they found he would tell the truth in the matter—that B. T. Roberts had nothing to do with publishing the document in question—they did not call upon him to testify.

All the testimony that was given to prove the charge and the three principal specifications, was by Rev. John Bowman—and this testimony was impeached. It was also, in the essential point of assisting in the publication of the pamphlet, contradicted by Geo. W. Estes. John Bowman testified as follows:

"I have seen this document entitled, 'New School Methodism,' and 'To whom it may concern,' signed 'Geo. W. Estes,' before. I first saw it on the cars between Medina and Lockport. Brother Roberts presented it to me; several were presented in a package; there were, I think, three dozen. Brother Roberts desired me to leave a portion of them at Medina, conditionally. He requested me to circulate them; he desired me to leave a portion of them with Brother Codd, or Brother Williams of Medina, provided I fell in company with them. I put a question to him whether they were to be distributed gratuitously or sold. He said he would like to get enough to defray the expense of printing, but circulate them any how; he desired me not to make it known that

he had any agency in the matter of circulating the document, if I could consistently keep it to myself. I do not know where Brother Roberts got on the cars. My impression is, we were traveling east. I do not know as anything more was said about the payment of printing them; my recollection is not very distinct; he mentioned he had been at some considerable expense."

On the contrary, I proved from George W. Estes, that I had nothing whatever to do with its publication.

Mr. Estes testified as follows:

"Brother Roberts had nothing to do with publishing, or assisting in publishing the document under consideration, to my knowledge, and I presume to know. He had nothing to do with the writing of the part that bears my name; I do not know that he had any knowledge that its publication was intended; he never gave his consent that the part entitled "New School Methodism," should be republished by me, or any one else, to my knowledge; he was never responsible for the publication, either in whole or in part; he never contributed anything to the payment of its publication, to my knowledge; I intended that so far as sold, it should go to defray the expenses of publication; I never sold him any."

Cross-examination:

"I never forwarded, or caused to be forwarded, any of them to Brother Roberts; I never gave him any personally; I do not know of any one giving or forwarding him any. I never gave orders to any

one to forward Brother Roberts any, to my knowledge."

In regard to circulation I offered the following testimony:

Rev. Russell Wilcox called:

"I am a local deacon of the M. E. Church in Pekin. I am intimately acquainted with Brother Roberts, the pastor of the church in Pekin. I do not know that he has ever circulated this pamphlet anywhere; I first saw it after I left home, on my way to this Conference."

Rev. J. P. Kent called:

"I did ask the defendant for one of these pamphlets; I wished to see one of them, and I asked Brother Roberts if he could let me have one; he said he did not circulate them, but he had no objection to my seeing the one he had. This was a few weeks ago, at the Holley or Albion grove meeting; perhaps it was about the first of August."

This is all the testimony that was offered to prove the specifications—the testimony of one man, and this testimony was impeached by several members of the Conference.—Even John Bowman says his *recollection was not very distinct.* No wonder. But George Estes was very clear in his recollection, and very distinct in his statements.

The fact is, I had nothing to do with the publishing of the pamphlet and took but little interest in it. I was busy with other work.

We ask in the name of candor, ought this testimony—thus contradicted, to have convicted any man? Did any honorable Court ever give a verdict of condemnation on so slight an apology for a shadow of evidence? Many of the Conference appeared to care nothing for the testimony. Some were out gathering chestnuts, and having a good time generally, while testimony was being taken, but came back in time to vote the charge and specifications sustained!

Desiring to have light thrown on many of the points raised in the Estes pamphlet, I examined a large number of witnesses on these points. Thus we proved that they held secret meetings; and other matters, to some of which we have already referred, were brought to light.

The pleadings were finished at an early hour in the evening. Such was the impression made that the leaders of the opposition did not dare to take the vote that evening. They feared that they could not secure a conviction; so they adjourned—held their secret meeting—and worked their courage up to the point where they could come into Conference the next morning and vote the specifications, and the charge sustained. They then voted expulsion from the Conference and the church!

As a sort of justification, some have alleged that I was expelled because I tried to prove the allegations made by Estes, true. But that only shows the injustice of the majority of the Conference in a still stronger light. What! Condemn a man for a crime of which he was not even accused! Speaking of the trial of Rev. B. T. Roberts in 1857 and 1858, the Rev. C. D. Burlingham says:

"It is a notorious fact that those verdicts are not based on *testimony proving criminal acts or words.* Several who voted with, and others who sympathize with the 'majority,' have said, 'Well, if the charges were not sustained by sufficient proof, the Conference served them right, for they are great agitators and promoters of disorder and fanaticism.'

There you have it. Men tried for one thing and condemned for another! What iniquitous jurisprudence will not such a principle cover?

Why not try them for promoting disorder and fanaticism? Because the failure of such an effort to convict would have been the certain result."*

In looking back upon the action of the Conference, I can account for it only on the theory that the leaders of the so called Regency party did not feel safe as long as we remained in the Conference.

Personally, I had no reason to suppose that I was unpopular. I was on good terms

*"Outline History," page 40, Sec. 21.

socially with all the preachers. My appointments had always been all that I could have desired. Twice during my last trial they gave me such tokens of respect as I have never heard of being paid by a court to a man, while they were trying him for a criminal offense. Once during the progress of my trial, they adjourned it over a day to hold a funeral service in honor of Rev. William C. Kendall, who had died during the year. By a unanimous vote of the Conference, which spontaneously saw the fitness of the selection, I was appointed to preach the funeral sermon to the Conference, which I did, with two Bishops sitting by my side.

At another time during the trial, the anniversary of the American Bible Society was held, and by another unanimous vote, I was appointed to preside at this public meeting! Was this in imitation of the old idolaters who first crowned with garlands the victims they were about to sacrifice; or, was it rather the natural homage which men often instinctively pay to those whom they know to be right, even while they persecute them?

Against Rev. Joseph McCreery charges and specifications were preferred essentially the same as those against Rev. B. T. Roberts. They were signed by H. Ryan Smith.

We copy the following from Mr. McCreery's account of his trial:

"Died Abner as a fool dieth."—2 Sam. iii, 33.

Rev. J. G. Miller was appointed to assist in conducting the prosecution.

The defendant declined any counsel. He had not been summoned to his *real* trial which had been going on in secret for several nights past in the Odd Fellows Hall, in Perry, and did not think it worth while to trouble any one to act as counsel in a judicial farce.

The prosecutor said they had concluded not to traverse the items of the Bill of Charges; which had occupied so much time in the preceding trial. 'We will limit the case to the two main points of the *Publication* and the *Circulation*.'

The defendant replied they might omit the whole, if they chose—or any part they pleased. He was not at all particular about the matter. It would save time to forego the trial and vote the verdict at once. I appeal to the General Conference. The Bishop remarked that the notice of appeal was premature.

Revs. C. P. Clark and W. Scism testified that defendant had circulated the Estes pamphlet. The prosecution here introduced as testimony, a card about three inches by two; of rather dingy appearance, and seriously nibbled at one corner; and marked on one side with certain ominous and cabalistic letters and figures. * *

The card was grabbed up by S. M. Hopkins, as stated in his testimony, and carefully kept unto the day of doom. The defendant had traveled the Parma cir-

cuit, one of the best and most Methodistic in the Conference, for the two years previous, and Hopkins had been sent on by the Buffalo Regency, to watch Brother Abel, and pick up something that might be used in this conspiracy against the defendant. For this service, his masters voted him *sixty dollars* out of the Conference funds; under the pretense that this faithful discharge of duty had lessened his receipts to that amount. On canvassing the Conference, it was found impossible to get a majority committed against Brother Abel; and there was also lack of adequate 'help in the gate' to warrant the undertaking. Carlton, who was at the bottom of all this trickery, (all the while as sober and solemn as a saint) did not think it policy to attack him seriously. The character of Bro. A. was merely arrested, slurred a little, and allowed to pass. So this card was the only available crumb of Hopkins' scratching and picking. After being duly testified to, as herein followeth, it was marked 'R' with commendable gravity, and solemnly filed among the documents of this persecution.

Rev. J. B. Wentworth called.—Are you acquainted with defendant's hand-writing? I am. I have received letters from him. It is my opinion that this card is in his hand-writing. I am quite sure it is.

Rev. J. M. Fuller called.—Are you acquainted with defendant's hand-writing? Ans.—I am, sir. I have no doubt this card is in his hand-writing. I can't say when or where I first saw this card; it was a few weeks since.

Rev. S. M. Hopkins called.—Did you ever see this card before? Ans.—Yes. I saw it first in the pulpit of

the M. E. Church, in Parma Centre, about the middle of last November. There was a four day's meeting there, called by some a general quarterly meeting. Defendant was there. I saw the Estes pamphlet at that meeting; there was an abundance of them. I saw, as near as I could judge an hundred or an hundred and fifty copies. I bought some from a carriage in which Sister McCreery rode, and also Sister Fuller, who had been living with them. I did not see the defendant come to the meeting; but on inquiry, I judged it to be his carriage.

Cross-questioned.—I first saw the card lying on the kneeling stool in the pulpit. I considered it an important document. I thought it might shed light on the fountain whence these fly-sheets came. I am not positive whose buggy the fly-sheets were in. I bought eight copies from the arm-full that was brought from the buggy by Sister Fuller; to whom I paid the money. I do not recollect the exact price I paid. Brother Estes was at the meeting. I do not know whether they were sold on his account or not. Sister Fuller seemed to do the business; whether the money went to Brother Estes or somebody else, I cannot say. I bought a dollar's worth. Part of them I found in the house of Brother Dunn. I paid all the money to Sister Fuller. I do not know that she was living at Brother Duels at the time; she was at the defendant's house during Conference. I soon found these pamphlets in almost every Methodist family on the circuit.

Ques.—Did you send a copy to any Methodist by mail?

This question was objected to by the prosecutor,

who remarked that Brother Hopkins was not on trial for circulating the document. Though a hundred were engaged in a crime, it would not excuse any individual participant.

The defendant wished to show that every body had circulated the pamphlet. No one ever dreamed of crime or contumacy in doing so. Both Regency and Nazarite preachers, men, women and children, did it with all the freedom they would an almanac or Fox's Book of Martyrs. The charge of contumacy for doing what every body else did, was a ridiculous farce. Seven hours ago, at the bidding of his masters, this witness stood up and voted Brother Roberts expelled from the church, on the charge of circulating this pamphlet; and has pledged himself in secret conclave to do me the same service a few hours hence. Now, I wish to say by implication, that the criminality in the case is an after thought; a fiction fabricated for the occasion. Other witnesses have volunteered to tell what they did with their packages. I wish to know what the witness did with his dollar's worth.

The witness stated that he had had a bill of charges served on him, exactly like that against the defendant; in fact it was the identical bill with defendant's name erased, and his own inserted in its place.

The Bishop decided that the witness could not be required to answer so as to criminate himself.

Ans.—I think I did the church no harm in what I did with the copies I bought; I had the best interests of the church in view.

The testimony of Brother Estes was substantially

the same that he gave in Brother Roberts' trial, to wit: That he alone was the responsible author and publisher of the pamphlet bearing his name. He did not forward a copy to defendant for proof reading. He had no recollection of ordering the printer to do so. He presumed he ordered it to be sent somewhere, to some body. As the Conference had seen fit to assume that the publication was a crime, he should not put them on the track of any more victims by saying to whom he ordered it sent. Several laymen saw it before it was published. Some advised the publication, and some dissuaded from it. He had been threatened with a civil prosecution for the publication. He was ready for it any day. He alone was responsible; and he was ready and able to prove all he had published, in a civil court, whenever he should be called upon. Everbody had circulated it.

Testimony for the defense:

Rev. S. Hunt called.—Have you seen in the *Buffalo Christian Advocate*, a notice of the proceedings of the last Conference in the case of Brother Roberts?

Ans.—I think I read a reference to it. (Here Bishop Baker hastily left the chair, and Bishop Janes took it.) Ques.—Did that paper give the charge and specifications of the trial? This question was objected to as irrelevant, by the prosecutor, who said, 'We are not trying newspapers here.'

Defendant: 'But we are doing the next thing to it—we are trying a pamphlet. Now I wish to show that newspaper falsehood is justification for pamphlet truth as an antidote. The trial of Brother Roberts had become a notorious newspaper fact. The

Buffalo Advocate had published *ex parte* reports, white-washing one side, and black-balling the other. And when it was asked, as it was concerning one guilty of something like the same crime, eighteen hundred years ago, 'Why, what harm hath he done?' the only response of this organ of the Genesee Conference Sadducees was: *unchristian and immoral conduct!* On this text, furnished by a judicial trickery of the lowest grade, the changes were rung; while *the thing he did* was carefully kept out of sight. Truth demanded the re-publication of "New School Methodism," that people might know what sort of writing it was that was so criminal. And a justifiable curiosity demanded a faithful expose of the several Carltonian modes of reasoning employed by the masters of this judicial ceremony, to bring the Conference to this strange verdict of '*Immorality*,' in the case. The defendant claims it his right to show this in justification of the facts charged in the indictment.'

The objection was sustained by the Bishop. Whereupon all further defense was silently declined.

Thus the defensive testimony amounts in all, to two questions and one answer.

The prosecutor made a grandiloquent plea.

The defendant answered not a word.

The defendant was voted guilty of the specifications, and of the charge.

And he was expelled from the Conference and from the Church, by the usual number of votes—50.

SYNOPSIS OF THE VOTE.

Regular Regency men, ...	33
Presiding elderlings, ...	15

Serious ninnies, affrighted with the bug-bear of Nazaritism,	2
Total vote for expulsion,	50
Members who voted against expulsion,.	17
Members of Conference who did not vote at all,	53
Total who did not vote for expulsion	70
Total number of members,	120

It will be noticed that a remarkably large number of the preachers did not vote. Carlton had managed to have it carefully whispered around, so loud that all could hear it, that the Bishop was going to make the appointments of the preachers according to their *standing up for the church; i, e.* the regency faction;—in this eventful crisis. All the presiding elders were *fast friends of the church:—i. e.* the tools of Carlton, Robie & Co.,—except one; and he was removed at this Conference, and expelled at the next. The skillful rattling of the loaves and fishes in the market baskets labelled P. E. did the thing. It worked both ways; gaining both votes, and blanks, or *no votes.*

This accounts for a large number who would not vote wickedly, and dare not vote righteously. The appointing power is omnipotent;—and he who has the faculty of fawning, or bullying, or deceiving it into his service, can do or be anything he pleases.

Each of us gave notice of an appeal to the General Conference.

But what should we do in the mean while? We were both twenty years younger than we are now, full of life, and energy, and anxious to save our own souls and as many others as

we could. Neither of us had any thought of forming a new church—we had great love for Methodism, and unfaltering confidence in the integrity of the body as a whole. We did not doubt but that the General Conference would make matters right. But we did not like to stand idly waiting two long years. We took advice of men of age and experience, in whom we had confidence.

As I left the Conference Bishop Janes shook hands with me cordially and said, "Do not be discouraged, Brother Roberts—there is a bright future before you yet."

Rev. Amos Hard in a letter still before us wrote:

"At the session of the Genesee Conference held at Perry, October 1858, while the character of several brethren was under arrest, I had with Bishop Janes substantially the following conversation:

'Would the joining of another church by an expelled member invalidate his appeal?'

He replied: 'I would prefer not to answer that question to-night, as I do not call to mind the action of the General Conference in the case of John C. Green.'

I then asked, 'Would it affect his appeal if an expelled member should join our church on probation?'

He replied: 'I do not think it would.'

(Signed,) AMOS HARD."

The Rev. William Reddy was then among

the prominent ministers of the M. E. Church. He was a successful presiding elder—highly esteemed for his piety and sound judgment. He had been several times a member of the General Conference. He wrote as follows:

"GENOA, Oct. 29, 1858.

DEAR BROTHER ROBERTS:

Let me freely speak to you. The General Conference will not be under such an inflammation as was the Genesee Conference, and I think they will judge righteous judgment. At all events, I am glad you exercise your rights and have appealed; and I am glad you appealed from last year's sentence, because this year's is founded on the last.

But now as to your course until General Conference: I think I would do one of two things—either join on trial at, say Pekin, where you labored last year; or not join at all until after General Conference. It occurred to me since reading your letter, that you had better not join or attempt to join even on probation; but as to relation, remain where you are until the appeal is decided.

Then, as to labor, you feel, and others believe, that God has called and commissioned you to *preach the unsearchable riches of Christ.* The Genesee Conference has said you should not preach under their authority; but you have not lost your Christian character, nor has their act worked the forfeiture of your commission from God. I would then go on and *preach* and labor for souls, and promote the work of the Lord, under the *avowed declaration* that you do it, not as by the authority of the M. E. Church, but

by virtue of your divine call. Then, whoever invites your labor or comes to hear you, they alone are responsible. You violate then no church relation, because you have none. You violate no church order, for you are not now under church authority. You are simply God's messenger. I would not exercise the functions of a *minister*, for that implies church authority and order, and that you have not. I would not officiate at meetings nor administer the sacraments, *as a minister*. But I would preach because God calls—I would receive the sacrament of the supper, if invited and *permitted*, because *Christ commands*. I would forego the other points for the sake of your appeal, and to show that you are not so very contumacious. This very course, I doubt not, will increase sympathy for you, and *increase your influence*, and if you are restored, will put you on higher ground than ever. Meantime I would avoid reference as far as possible to your *opposers* and oppressors, as though you were fighting *them*. 'Contend for the faith once delivered to the saints.' 'Let them that suffer according *to the will* of God commit the keeping of their souls unto him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator.'

I do not see why you may not, in that way, promote the work of real *holiness*, and the salvation of sinners. Go where you are invited, and where the door opens, *not in the name of the M. E. Church*, but simply as *a man of God to preach the Gospel*. Who shall forbid your doing this?

But keep yourself from appearing to set yourself in array against the authority and order of the M. E. Church, *while you claim the constitutional rights*

of an expelled member. I believe God will bring you out like gold, tried in the fire.

Dear Brother, excuse my liberty. These are but suggestions coming spontaneously from a brother's anxious heart. I praise God that he keeps you.

Yours faithfully,

WILLIAM REDDY."

On the whole we thought, and our friends thought that we had better join on probation; this would show our loyalty to the church. It was hardly possible for us to hold meetings without sometimes worshiping with some of the salvation preachers in the Conference. Our holding a relation to the church would, it was thought, shield them from censure.

We could not, in conscience make confession for what we had been expelled—for we felt we had done no wrong. So we adopted Bishop Baker's construction of the discipline.

"When a member or preacher has been expelled, according to due form of discipline, he can not afterward enjoy the privileges of society and sacrament, in our church, without contrition, confession, and satisfactory reformation; but if, however, the society become convinced of the *innocence* of the expelled member, he may again be received on trial, without confession."

The society at Pekin, which I served last, were convinced of my *innocence*, and unanimously received me on trial.

Joseph McCreery was received, also unanimously, on probation by the society at Spencerport.

We received, each of us, from the society which we had respectively joined, license to exhort; and we went out, holding meetings as providence opened the way. There was a deep, religious interest wherever we went, and many, we trust, were converted, and many believers sanctified wholly, and the people generally awakened to a sense of their eternal interests.

CHAPTER IX.

LAYMEN'S CONVENTION.

These violent expulsions naturally created intense excitement all over the Conference. Articles upon the subject appeared in many of the papers, religious and secular, nearly all, except those written in the interest of the majority, condemning the action of the Conference. Quarterly conferences and official boards passed resolutions expressing their sense of the great wrong which had been committed.

At length, Isaac M. Chesbrough, of Pekin, Niagara County, N.Y., suggested the holding of a convention of representative brethren from those societies within the bounds of the Genesee Conference which were opposed to its oppressive action.

He was an old Methodist of fifty years standing, a man of great intelligence, sound judgment, unbending integrity and large experience in the world. He was always ready to succor the distressed, to encourage the desponding, and to stand by the oppressed. He saw quickly through mere pretensions, abhorred hypocrisy and shams, and was not afraid to act up to his convictions. His pro-

posal met with general favor. A call for a convention was made, signed by over one hundred of the leading men of twenty-two circuits and stations.

In answer to the call, one hundred and ninety five leading men, from forty-seven circuits and stations, met at Albion, December 1st, 1858, for the purpose of holding a convention. A layman's love feast was held in the M. E. Church the first evening, which was a service of great interest. The Convention was held in Kingsland Hall.

Hon. Abner I. Wood was chosen President; I. M. Chesbrough, G. W. Holmes, S. C. Springer, G. C. Sheldon, J. H. Brooks, George Bascom and C. Sanford, Vice-Presidents; S. K. J. Chesbrough, W. H. Doyle and J. A. Latta were chosen Secretaries.

A committee on resolutions was appointed, composed of S. K. J. Chesbrough, W. H. Doyle, G. W. Estes, S. S. Rice, John Billings, A. Ames and J. Handly. They brought in a report setting forth in plain terms the grievances of which they complained, which, after being ably discussed, was unanimously adopted.

In speaking of the expulsions, they said:

"We look upon the expulsion of brothers Roberts and McCreery as an act of wicked persecution, calling for the strongest condemnation. It was also a

palpable violation of that freedom of speech and of the press which is guaranteed to all by our free institutions."

In reference to the article written by Rev. B. T. Roberts, which was made the basis of the Conference action, they say:

"The candor and good spirit of his article is apparent. We have ourselves heard different preachers in sympathy with the "Regency party" set forth views similar to those ascribed to them in "New School Methodism."

Respecting the "fanaticism" which these men and others were charged with promoting, they said:

"So trifling was the accusation against these brethren, that in all the efforts that have been made to vindicate those voting for their condemnation, no one has attempted to show that the testimony justified the decision. Their only defence is, 'If these men did not deserve to be expelled for circulating the pamphlet, they did for promoting enthusiasm and fanaticism.' If so, why were they not tried for it? Where is the justice of trying men for one thing, and condemning them for another?

In reference to this charge of 'fanaticism and enthusiasm,' we feel prepared to speak. Our means of information are far more reliable than the means of those preachers who bring the accusation. We have attended the "camp meetings and General Quarterly meetings," against which a special outcry has been made as the "hot-beds of enthusiasm." We have listened to the preaching of these brethren who are

charged with promoting these disorders—have heard some of them by the year. *We know what Methodism is;* some of us were converted, and joined the church under the labors of her honored pioneers. We speak advisedly then, when we say that the charge brought against brothers Roberts and McCreery, and the class of preachers denominated "Nazarites," of promoting fanaticism," is *utterly false and groundless.* They are simply trying to have us in earnest to gain heaven. Instead of attacking the church, they are its defenders. They preach the doctrines of the Methodist Church, as we used to hear them preached years ago; and through their instrumentality many have been made to rejoice in the enjoyment of a PRESENT AND FULL SALVATION. We cannot say this of their opposers. The Regency affirm that they preach the doctrines of holinesss. We have yet to learn of the first person who has of late years experienced this blessing through their instrumentality. On the contrary, we believe some of them have put down the standard of justification far below what Methodism and Scripture will warrant. Whether, therefore, we consider the ostensible, or the real cause of the expulsion of brothers Roberts and McCreery, the act calls for and receives our hearty and earnest condemnation."

Of the impossibility of bringing accused "Regency" preachers to justice, they said:

"Nor can we pass by as undeserving of notice, the course pursued by the 'Regency party,' whenever complaints of a serious character have been brought against any of their number.

Reports that some of them have been guilty of 'crimes expressly forbidden in the word of God,' and involving a high degree of moral turpitude have been current. Complaints have been made, and though the proof of their guilt was deemed ample, yet they have been summarily dismissed, and in such a way as to discourage all efforts to bring to justice before the Conference, any of the 'Regency' preachers, no matter how wicked and immoral he may be."

From standard works written in defense of the Methodist polity, they show that, while in that church the laity had no voice in making and administering the laws, yet they were understood to have had an effectual remedy against clerical oppression, in their power to withhold support from unworthy preachers.

"One patent remedy is within our reach, the power to withhold our supplies. We are satisfied that no matter how strongly we may condemn the course of the Regency faction, they will not amend, so long as they are sustained.—Besides we can not in conscience give our money to put down the work of the Lord. Therefore, we wish it distinctly understood that we can not pay one farthing to preacher or presiding elder, who voted for the expulsion of Brothers Roberts and McCreery: only upon 'contrition, confession, and satisfactory reformation.'

It may be thought by some that such action on our part is revolutionary. But from the following extracts, it will appear that we are only exercising our undisputed rights, in a constitutional way.

We are giving unquestionable proofs of our loyalty to the Church, by thus endeavoring to correct one of the most oppressive and tyrannical abuses of power that was ever heard of.

We trust that none will think of leaving the church—but let us all stand by and apply the proper, legitimate remedy for the shameless outrages that have been perpetrated under the forms of justice.

We quote from an Essay on Church Polity, by Rev. Abel Stevens, LL. D. This book has been adopted by the General Conference as a text book in the course of study for young preachers. Hence, it is of the highest authority. Dr. Stevens says, 'Church Polity, page 162.—'What check have the *people* on this machinery? It is clear that as the preachers appoint the Bishops, and the Bishops distribute the preachers, the people should check the whole plan by a counterbalance upon the whole ministerial body. This is provided in the most decisive form that it could possibly assume, namely, the power of pecuniary supplies. No *stipulated contract* for support exists in the Methodist economy. The discipline *allows* a certain support, but does not enforce it; and no Methodist preacher *can prosecute* a civil suit for his salary. The General Conference disclaims all right to tax the property of our members.

A Methodist Church has no necessity, in order to control or remove the preacher, to prosecute him by a tedious and expensive process at law, but simply to signify that after a given date HIS SUPPLIES CEASE. He cannot live on air; he must submit or depart.

This would be a sufficient guaranty, certainly; and this check applies not merely to a specific prerogative

of the ministry, but to the *whole* ministerial system. The lamented Dr. Emory thus states:

'We have said the Methodist Episcopal Church possesses effective and substantial security against any encroachments of tyranny on the part of her pastors. For the sober truth is, that there is not a body of ministers in the world more perfectly dependent on those whom they serve than the Methodist Itinerant Ministry.—Our system places us, in fact, not only from year to year, or from quarter to quarter, but from week to week within the reach of such a controlling check, on the part of the people, as is possessed, we verily believe, by no other denomination whatever.'

'Dr. Bond in his Economy of Methodism page 35, says;

The General Conference have never considered themselves authorized to levy taxes upon the laity, or to make any pecuniary contribution a condition of membership in the church. Our preachers are totally dependent upon the voluntary contributions of the laity: and we thereby have over them a positive and absolute control; for whenever their flocks shall withdraw their support, the preachers will be under the necessity of abandoning their present pastoral relation, and of betaking themselves to some secular occupation. The travelling preacher who depends for bread, both for himself and family, upon the good will of the lay brethren, can have no temptation to any unwarrantable or odious exercise of authority over them.'

In 'Ecclesiastical Polity, by Rev. A. N. Fillmore,' page 166 we have the following:—'Methodist preach-

ers have no means of enforcing the payment of a cent for their support, for although the discipline provides for a certain allowance, it furnishes no means to obtain it; and there is no article even to expose a member to censure for neglecting or refusing to contribute for the support of the Gospel.'

Thus the right to withhold supplies, upon good and sufficient reasons, is conceded and urged by standard authors of our church. That such a reason now exists, must be apparent to every one that is not entirely blinded to the claims of justice and humanity."

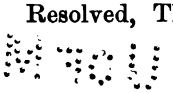
In describing the origin of the Convention they say:

"This Convention originated among ourselves. The first suggestion was made by one of our number. Neither the brethren expelled, nor any of the members of the Conference had anything to do whatever with calling this Convention. We mention this fact, because the insinuation is frequently made, that the people can do nothing except at the instigation of the preachers. We are not papists, requiring to be instructed by the priesthood at every turn what action we shall take, or what papers and books we shall read."

The following were the resolutions of general importance adopted.

"Resolved, That we have the utmost confidence in Brothers B. T. Roberts and Joseph McCreery, notwithstanding their expulsion from the Conference, ranking them, as we do, among the most pure and able ministers of the New Testament.

Resolved, That we adhere to the doctrines and



usages of the fathers of Methodism. Our attachment to the M. E. Church is earnest and hearty, but we do not acknowledge the oppressive policy of the secret fraternity in the Conference, known as the Buffalo Regency, as the action of the church; and we cannot and will not submit to the same. We hold it as a gross mal-administration under the assumed sanction of judicial forms.

Resolved, That the laity are of some use to the church, and that their views and opinions ought to command some little respect rather than that cool contempt with which their wishes have been treated by some of the officials of the Conference, for several years past.

Resolved, That the farcical cry of disunion and secession is the artful production of designing men, to frighten the feeble and timid into their plans of operation and proscription. We wish to have it distinctly understood that we have not, and never had the slightest intention of leaving the church of our choice, and that we heartily approve of the course of Brothers Roberts and McCreery in re-joining the church at their first opportunity, and we hope that the oppressive and unmethodistic administration indicated in the pastoral address as the current policy of the majority of the Conference, will not drive any of our brethren from the church. Methodists have a better right in the Methodist Episcopal Church than any body else, and by *God's* grace, in it we intend to remain.

Resolved, That it is a matter of no small grievance and of detriment to the Church of God that these preachers in their local, pastoral administration, have

deliberately set themselves to exclude from official position in the church, leaders, stewards and trustees, members of deep and undoubted Christian experience, because of their adhesion to spiritual, religious Methodism, and to supply their places with persons of slight and superficial religious experience, because of their adhesion to a worldly-policy Methodism.

Resolved, That we will not aid in the support of any member of the Genesee Conference who assisted, either by his vote or his influence, in the expulsion of Brothers Roberts and McCreery from the Conference and the church, until they are fully reinstated to their former position, and that we do recommend all those who believe that these brethren have been *unjustly* expelled from the Conference and the church, to take the same course.

Resolved, That we recommend Brother B. T. Roberts and Rev. J. McCreery to travel at large, and labor as opportunity presents for the promoting of the work of God and the salvation of souls."

These earnest, dignified utterances of this large, respectable body of Christian men, produced a profound impression upon the community.

The *Orleans American*, of Albion, in an editorial of Dec. 9, 1858, besides giving an account of the officers, and of the business done, said:

"On Thursday morning the Convention proceeded to business. The discussions were carried on with animation, in a good spirit, and with marked ability. The action of the Convention was harmonious to a

degree that we had not anticipated. It was composed of able men who had set themselves to work in earnest to correct what they believed to be a great evil in the administration of church affairs. Whether the course adopted will produce the desired result, remains to be seen. The number in attendance was much larger than we anticipated, all portions of the Conference being represented. W. G. Colegrove came from Smethport, McKean Co., Pa.; G. C. Sheldon from Allegany, and James Brooks from Olean. There was a large sprinkling of gray heads in the Convention. Prominent among the old men was I. M. Chesbrough, of Pekin, who first suggested the holding of a convention, a noble looking old gentleman, formerly from Baltimore. Mr. Jeffres of Covington,also won golden opinions by the pertinency and ability of his remarks."

In accordance with the recommendation of this convention, Brother McCreery and myself went throughout the Conference, in the name of Christ, holding meetings, and laboring for the salvation of souls. But we were careful to state that we claimed no authority from the M. E. Church to hold meetings—that we did as we were doing, at the call of Christ, on our own responsibility as men and as Christians. We not only announced this in the public congregations, but in the March following our expulsion, I published the following in the *Northern Independent:*

"It seems to be a question among the doctors,

whether I belong to the church or not. I did the best I could to stay in; and when I was thrust out without my fault, I tried to get back, and really thought I had accomplished it, but the president of a recent church trial, which trials, by the by, are becoming quite numerous in Genesee Conference, decided that I was not a member, even 'on probation.' As this was a 'judicial decision,' an 'act of administration,' of course it settles the question. But in or out, I trust I may still be permitted to entertain 'a desire to flee from the wrath to come.' Our excellent discipline specifies as among the fruits of this desire, 'instructing, reproving, and exhorting all we have any intercourse with.' This, then, is what I am doing. The Lord has opened a wide door, into which I have entered. I disclaim all authority from man, but simply 'instruct, reprove and exhort,' because I believe he has called me to it, and he blesses me in it. Everywhere we go, large and attentive congregations listen to the word with apparently deep interest."

But it is not too much to say that the dominant party were greatly excited. The *Buffalo Advocate* and the *Northern Advocate* seemed to vie with each other in pouring upon us, and upon all who gave us aid and comfort, a steady tirade of abuse. Dr. Hibbard treated us with great consideration until a clear majority was obtained against us. Then he went to every length to vindicate every act of the majority, and to create public sentiment against those whom they had proscribed.

The statements which he published in his paper about the proscribed party of the Genesee Conference were so incorrect, that Rev. W. Hosmer, who aimed to tell the truth, wherever it might hit, and who could not bear duplicity, gave him, in an editorial of January 29, 1859, this reminder: "We hope he will remember that even an official editor is under some obligations to speak the truth."

By means of these organs, and such other papers, as, through secret society influence they could control, our opposers kept flowing an incessant stream of exaggeration, and misrepresentation.

A prominent member of the East Genesee Conference said of them in the *Northern Independent:*

"If the *Advocate* and the clique whose servile and mercenary organ it is, will only keep from praising us, we shall consider ourselves most fortunate. Their abuse is the highest eulogy. Their commendation would be insufferable. With any marks of their approbation upon us, we should, as Cain did when he was branded, go out from the presence of the Lord, crying, 'My punishment is greater than I can bear.'"

The editor of the *Northern Independent*, who could not be awed into silence, spoke of the Conference action with his wonted

courage and sound sense. In one of his editorials, he said:

"THE ADVOCATE'S COURSE.

The editor of the *N. C. Advocate* is driving furiously at the "Nazarites." As if the unfortunate brethren designated by this slang term, had not been sufficiently persecuted, he pitches into them with characteristic bravery and acumen.

He affects to believe that such a thing as a Nazarite society once existed; other people, however, know better, and his historical developments pass for nothing. By the way, the editor writes on this subject with little discrimination. He seems to forget that among the most unbearable of things, is the triumph of official arrogance over fallen virtue. He should know that the man at whom his shafts are principally aimed, is his equal in every way, and his superior in learning, in talents, and in all the higher elements of ministerial character. We say these things the more freely, because we have never been a defender of the Nazarites. We have deemed it our duty to let them defend themselves—a work which they are well able to do. Our columns shall always be open to the persecuted. Two papers—the *N. C. Advocate*, and the *Buffalo Advocate*, are fully occupied in the noble work of extirpating these brethren, and to shut our columns against them in this extremity, would be a depth of meanness to which we care not to descend. We have not attacked the Regency, as the dominant party of the Conference is termed. One act of the Genesee Conference we have condemned, because it seemed

to us both unwise, and unjust, in a very high degree. Others may approve of the expulsion of Brothers Roberts and McCreery if they please, as this is a free country, but we shall have our own opinion of that matter, together with its cognate difficulties. In dissenting from a majority of the Conference, we occupy no partisan relation—it is an independent judgment of a particular occurrence. All oppression, whether at the North or the South, whether of black men, or white men, is alike wicked, and deserves our cordial detestation. We claim that men should have a fair trial, and that an arbitrary, high-handed way of disposing of them, is only a fresh display of the same rampant spirit of oppression that has kept the African trodden down for ages. But the most singular thing in all this, is the remarkable prowess of Brother Hibbard. Whenever the ecclesiastical guillotine cuts off a man's head, he immediately squares himself, like a knight errant, and assaults the dead carcass. He is terrible—against such a foe, Luther and Knox could not equal him."

Rev. Hiram Matteson, D. D., wrote:

"Who does not remember that just before the last General Conference Brother Hibbard had several long articles in the *Christian Advocate*, in advocacy of the very doctrines that he now calls 'Nazaritism.'"

Rev. C. D. Burlingham said:

The *Advocate* is doing its best to maintain its current reputation. For misrepresentation and abuse the *Northern Christian Advocate* is fully entitled to the palm. *Zeal, intense zeal* is usually a prominent trait in the character of a young convert."

CHAPTER X.

WAR AGAINST THE MEMBERS.

Arbitrary power demands abject submission. Conscious of their strength and flushed with their victory, the preachers used every means to bring the members who opposed the oppressive acts of the Conference, into subjection. We have never read, in any period of the church's history, of the employment by the preachers, of more arbitrary and tyrannical measures than those adopted by the preachers of the dominant party in the Genesee Conference to subjugate those members who would not bow implicitly to their authority. Had such tyranny been exercised by the priests of the Roman Catholic church, there would have been an outcry raised which would have been heard all over the land and across the Atlantic.

To expel members and read them out withdrawn without their consent became the order of the day. The preacher was often prosecutor, witness, judge, and if not jury, it was a servile body of his own creation. He selected the committee who tried the case. Where enough men sufficiently pliant to do his bid-

ding could not be found in the society, he imported them from a distance.

"I will not do your dirty work for you," indignantly said a local preacher of the circuit, when asked to sit on a jury to expel Claudius Brainard. So one was brought seventy miles, from Buffalo, for the purpose.

To have attended the Albion Convention was held to be a crime sufficient for expulsion. No matter how long a man had been a member of the M. E. Church, or how important his services, or how great his sacrifices had been in its behalf; no matter how spotless his reputation or godly his life, if he dared to befriend those whom the majority of the Conference had anathematized, he was liable to have the heaviest anathemas poured upon his head.

One preacher was arrested for praying with us. By chance, Rev. Rufus Cooley and his wife, and myself and Mrs. Roberts met at the house of Mrs. Cooley's mother. After tea we had a season of prayer. Mr. Cooley prayed and I prayed. For this offence the character of the Rev. Rufus Cooley was arrested at the next session of the Genesee Conference!

On the 14th of February, 1859, the Rev. Claudius Brainard, of North Chili, was tried and expelled for attending the Laymen's Convention at Albion. There were three charges

and nineteen specifications preferred against him, all taken from the proceedings of the Laymen's Convention.

For a number of years Claudius Brainard was an acceptable and useful, travelling preacher. His health failing him, he was obliged to locate. He continued, however, to preach, as his health permitted, and his services were needed. His acquaintance was extensive, and wherever known he was regarded as a deeply devoted Christian, and a man of unbending integrity and sincere piety. To make the matter sure, the Rev. J. B. Lankton, preacher in charge, summoned a committee of local preachers from a distance—men who could be depended on to execute the will of the "Regency."

Of his expulsion, Mr. Brainard said in the *Independent*, of February 15th, 1859:

"Yesterday, I was expelled from the M. E. Church, for attending the Laymen's Convention. No other charge was preferred. For all harsh words or unchristian expressions, just retraction was made. My expulsion was for the expression of my honest sentiments. Had I given up my judgment to an Annual Conference, I could have retained my standing in the church. But then I should not have been a minister of the Lord Jesus Christ, nor even a Christian. I would die a martyr's death for my own judgment, rather than yield my judgment to an Annual Conference. My soul sweetly rests in Christ.

A consciousness of right, and the approval of my Judge, sustain me. I shall unite on trial, the first opportunity, with the M. E. Church. It is time the laity were awake to their own rights in the church."

Mr. Brainard appealed to the Annual Conference, but they refused to entertain the appeal. This was contrary to an explicit rule of discipline, but they paid no attention to the discipline, only as far as they could use it to punish those who would not submit to their dictation.

When the Rev. Wm. D. Buck, a personal friend of Mr. Brainard, was asked why he voted against entertaining his appeal, he frankly replied, "Because Bishop Simpson told me to."

William Hosmer was the only editor that was awake to the enormities that were being perpetrated, or that had the honesty or the courage to hold them up to public reprobation. In reply to some who endeavored to conceal the fact that Mr. Brainard was expelled for attending the Albion Convention, because there were three charges against him, Mr. Hosmer said:

"Three charges were, to all intents and purposes, one charge, and but one, unless the specifications relied on to support them had their origin in circumstances apart from the Albion Convention.—The crime of attending that Convention might have been prosecuted under forty different heads, and by a

thousand different specifications, and yet all would have been substantially one and the same charge. In order to show that there was in reality more charges than one, it should have been made to appear that crimes unconnected with said Convention, and of a wholly different character, were alleged against the party accused. For prudential reasons, it is not uncommon in criminal prosecutions of this kind to disguise the real offense under formidable allegations which no one expects to prove or ever supposed to be true. In such a case, though the charges are not proved, they help blacken the character and cover the nakedness of the attempt. If sham charges are made, some will believe them, and in the mean time the accused can be convicted with better grace on the less flagrant points in the indictment. What the facts in this case are can only be known from the specifications themselves, and the entire history connected with the trial. The matter is in itself of very great moment, because it clearly involves the right of the laity to assemble for the redress of grievances. If attendance on such meetings is to be construed into a crime, or, if words spoken there are to be prosecuted under the grave head of 'contumacy,' 'slander,' 'sowing discord,' etc.; then whatever may happen, our laymen must be silent on pain of expulsion. Such a condition of things would be nothing better than now falls to the lot of the deluded votaries of the Catholic Church. Can the brethren concerned in this apparently unfortunate piece of administration, show that Brother Brainard was not expelled for words spoken, or deeds done, at the Albion Convention? Had this case

stood alone, we should not have noticed it, as occasional errors are to be met with in the best administrations, but there is good reason to suppose that it connects with a principle which is to have a wide application.—When ecclesiastical persecution assumes a judicial form, it is one of the most tremendous scourges ever let loose upon society. The fires of Smithfield were kindled by misguided church judicatories, and every Romish *auto-da-fe* has the same origin. Believing not only that these ecclesiastical decapitations are the worst kind of murder, but that slavery will demand in other Conferences a repetition of the scenes enacted in the Genesee Conference, we shall both apprise the public of what is going on and strip the proceedings of their assumed sanctity."

On the same circuit Mr. Thomas Hannah and Alexander Patten were also expelled for the same cause. They were well-to-do farmers, men of solid judgment and sound piety. Mr. Hannah had recently paid three hundred dollars for a church on the circuit, and given his note for three hundred more. This they collected, though they had unceremoniously excluded him from the house for which it was intended to pay.

Mr. John Prue, Mrs. Sarah Prue, Mr. and Mrs. Hutchins, Mrs. Elizabeth Porter, Mrs. H. Loder, Fanny Smith and Mrs. N. S. Brainard, were read out as "withdrawn" without their consent. Mr. Prue, and others, had

just paid liberally towards building the churches.

On the adjoining circuit Mr. Hart Smith, an upright, conscientious Christian, for years a member of the church, was expelled by Rev. Sumner Smith, with the help of a committee taken from Chili, the members in Churchville refusing to act in the case.

On the 13th of April, 1859, Mr. Thomas B. Catton, of Perry, was tried by his pastor, Rev. W. S. Tuttle. There were four charges and twenty-three specifications presented against him. The pastor assumed in the outset that he should be expelled, and cited him:

"To answer to said charges and specifications, and show cause why you should not be expelled from the M. E. Church."

In other courts, the *prosecution must show cause why the accused should be punished*, but in this court it was taken for granted that one accused of being a "Nazarite" deserved the highest penalty of the law, and *he must show cause why it should not be inflicted.*

As in the case of Rev. Mr. Lankton, the Rev. W. S. Tuttle claimed to be one against whom the action of the Albion Convention was directed—that is to be a party in the case—and yet he acted as Judge, selected his own jury, and in reality conducted the prosecution.

Mr. Catton wrote us of his trial at the time:

"You can get only a very faint idea of the proceedings, from the minutes. Brother Hibbard said in speaking of your trial, that, 'all the forms of law were exhausted;' we think in my case that all the forms of law were outraged. When a Methodist minister can take such a stand, as the Rev. W. S. Tuttle took in this trial, and can find devotees to carry out his desires, it is high time for the laity to be aroused. There can be no safety, when a man claiming to be slandered, can, on the trial of the one accused of slandering him, sit as judge, and appoint the jury, and repudiate the laws of evidence, which have been established for ages. Who ever heard outside of the Genesee Conference, of a member of the M. E. Church being tried, and receiving a penalty, because he could not in conscience, pay the minister appointed? Yet Mr. Tuttle stated that he had written to Bishop Baker, and had his sanction for commencing an action under this new rule. I am now satisfied that the worst construction, that can be put upon the language used by the Albion Convention—if it was not true then, is certainly true now."

In this trial, several reliable witnesses testified that to their knowledge so-called "Regency" preachers were absent from the Conference a day at a time while the evidence was being given in the case of Rev. B. T. Roberts.

E. Sears, Thomas Jeffres and J. Grisewood testified that at different times they heard different preachers who voted for the expulsion

of B. T. Roberts say, that they did not vote for his expulsion *because* of the evidence adduced. The only reason any of them assigned was, because he undertook a defense of the Estes pamphlet. They heard seven different preachers at various times make this statement.

Mr. Catton made so vigorous a defense, and public sympathy was so much stirred up in his favor that, strange to say, he was not at that time expelled. He was censured. Afterwards he had another trial for "contumacy," and was finally disposed of with seventeen others who, without their consent, were read out as withdrawn.

Mr. Jonathan Handly, of Perry, one of the solid, quiet, substantial members of the church for over thirty years, against whose moral and Christian character his bitterest enemies could bring no accusation, was tried for attending the Laymen's Convention and expelled!

We copy the following from the Olean *Advertiser*, in relation to another who was expelled for attending the Albion Convention:

"James H. Brooks Esq., a resident of Olean these thirty odd years, a man of unblemished private character, a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church ever since he was fifteen years old, a Christian of acknowledged worth and usefulness, and a citizen against whom the breath of calumny has never breathed

until now, has been expelled from the church. This fact being announced, the inquiry is natural and pertinent—"Why?" This is just what we would like to know.

James H. Brooks has grown up in our midst from boyhood; his private worth is as familiar to our citizens, as a "thrice told tale." Generosity, integrity, honesty, and living piety, are eminent characteristics of the man. For the last twenty-eight years, he has been a member of the M. E. Church, and has contributed liberally for the advancement of Methodism, and the promulgation of the Gospel. The ministers and brethren of the church, have ever found a place at his board, and a welcome at his fire-side. It was indeed a truthful exclamation of the accused after his conviction, and was not contradicted by his accusers, "my old mother sitting there, has given more meals to Methodists, than all the rest of this church together."

The trial and expulsion of such a man, naturally produces in the public mind, a supposition that he has been guilty of some heinous offence, either against good morals or the peace of society, and that the proceedings were necessary to purify the church, and to warn the world against an unchristian example.

We however learn, and are gratified in being able to say that such is not the case, that he has neither adopted a spurious faith, nor has been guilty of any heresies, condemned by the doctrines of his church, nor has he indulged in any impropriety of conduct, that would warrant under any ordinary circumstances, his expulsion from the church.

In every human mind there is an innate sense of justice which is offended and aroused at acts of oppression and palpable wrongs. We confess we partake of the general feeling pervading this community, that a grievous wrong has been done Mr. Brooks.

So intolerable did the oppressive acts of the dominant preachers become that the laymen's Convention, to which the Rev. Mr. Crawford alludes in his account of the Bergen Camp-meeting, was called. In the call, the Hon. Abner I. Wood, President, and the secretaries, Rev. S. K. J. Chesbrough, and W. H. Doyle, say to the members of the late "Albion Convention:"

"DEAR BRETHREN: At our session at Albion, we were authorized to call a meeting again in June. We feel that the difficulties among us demand such a meeting. Ever since our action at Albion, we have been misrepresented, and our characters slandered. No stone has been left unturned, either by flattery or threatenings, to intimidate many from the positions then taken. How many have been led thus to withdraw from us, we know not; nor is it our concern. If any one feels duty thus calls him to retract, let him thus decide, and walk no more with us. We feel satisfied that not only a vast majority of those that attended still adhere to those resolutions, but many more who did not adhere, are now convinced that we have the right on our side, and *to day are in sympathy with us. Important* interests are at stake; we feel the iron heel of oppression heavily

laid upon us as laymen. We feel unwilling to become the slaves of any power. Many of our beloved brethren, who acted with us there, have been tried for attending that Convention—some have been expelled. Let us meet together,and show to them that the cause is one, and when they suffer, we suffer with them. If our action there is to be the "war-note," and the moving cause of our decapitation or removal from office, wherever possible, the time has come, yea, fully come, for us to stand firm and reiterate that our sentiments and our resolutions are still unchanged, and that we intend to maintain the position then taken, let the cost be what it may to us; the fear of expulsion or removal from office should never drive a Methodist from doing his duty.

We need also to reaffirm our undiminished confidence in our beloved Brothers Roberts and McCreery, and our condemnation of the unjust expulsion of these brethren from the Conference. Let us, to a man, stand by them, they are worthy of our sympathy and our "material aid."

We cordially and earnestly invite all our brethren who are in sympathy with us, and who are willing to act, to meet us in Convention at North Bergen, on the Genesee Camp Ground, Thursday, June 20, 1859, at 4 P. M., to take such action as may there be deemed advisable.

CHAPTER XI.

MORE PREACHERS EXPELLED.

The next session of the Genesee Conference was held at Brockport, in October, 1859. The efforts made to kill the influence of those whom they selected at the last Conference to make examples of, had most signally failed. These expelled preachers had never been more cordially received by the people than during the year.

The *Buffalo Advocate* and the *Northern Advocate* teemed with inflammatory appeals to their adherents to crush out what they called the "Nazaritism" yet remaining in the Conference. The dominant party of the Conference came together prepared to adopt any measures which their leaders proposed, to finish the work of extermination which they had commenced. Their ill-feeling was intensified at the sight which they witnessed when they came together.

In the outskirts of the village, in plain sight, and almost within hearing of the church, Fay H. Purdy, a well known evangelist of the M. E. Church, had commenced a tent meeting which was to continue during the session of Conference. * A large pavilion, capable of

*For account of this meeting see pages 128-131.

holding three thousand people, was spread. Around this were several rows of family and society tents. To this meeting were gathered a large number of intelligent, devoted, earnest Christians, who were stigmatized by the dominant party as "Nazarites."

It was evident at the opening of the Conference that extreme measures would be adopted. This expectation was not disappointed; yet, the audacity of the majority in trampling upon human and divine law, exceeded the anticipations of those who had the highest opinion of their capacity for wrong-doing.

According to the constitution of the M. E. Church, an Annual Conference has no legislative powers. It may execute such of the laws of the Church as may fall within its province, but it can make no laws. Nor can it give to any enactments of its own the force of laws by affixing to them a penalty. Its powers are executive and judicial.

Yet this Conference, the second day of its session, passed five "resolutions"—the first four of which were aimed against fraternizing with the expelled preachers, and against "holding in an irregular way, or in countenancing, by taking part in, the services of camp meetings, or other meetings thus irregularly held.

The last resolution provided, "That if any member of the Conference be found guilty of disregarding the opinions and principles expressed in the above resolutions, he shall be held to answer to this Conference for the same."*

These resolutions were made a test in the examination of character. Those preachers who would agree to be governed by these resolutions were passed; those who would not, were put on trial unless they would locate.

It is said that Bishop Simpson, who presided at this session, gave to these "test resolutions" his emphatic endorsement and support.

In accordance with the spirit of these resolutions, Bishop Simpson ordered several preachers who had come from other Conferences to assist Mr. Purdy in his meeting, to take no further part in it. Some obeyed, but Rev. D. W. Thurston, the presiding elder on Cortland district, Oneida Conference, continued to labor in the meetings. Bishop Simpson called him before a committee and admonished him, but the admonition was not heeded.

Under the operation of these resolutions, Rev. J. W. Reddy and H. H. Farnsworth were located. Revs. Loren Stiles, jr., John A. Wells, William Cooley and Charles D.

*For these resolutions see page 245

Burlingham, not being willing to submit to this tyrannical assumption of authority, were expelled *from the Conference and the Church.*

The charges against Rev. L. Stiles, Jr., were as follows:

I hereby charge Rev. L. Stiles, Jr.,

1. With falsehood.

In testifying in the case of B. T. Roberts, at the session of our Conference held at Perry, Oct. 6th, 1858, that he did not receive or read the proof sheet of a document printed at Brockport, signed Geo. W. Estes, and entitled "New School Methodism," and "To whom it may Concern;" and, in the case of J. McCreery, Jr., occurring at the same Conference, testifying that he did receive a paper purporting to be the proof sheet of such document—with an accompanying note explanatory of its nature, and *did* read it, or a portion of it.

2. With contumacy.

1st. In receiving into his pulpit, and treating as a minister, an expelled member from this Conference.

2nd. In going into the bounds of F. W. Conable's charge, and there holding meetings and organizing a class, contrary to the admonition of his presiding elder.

J. B. WENTWORTH.

The first charge was made simply to try to blacken his character. But there was no show of proof to sustain it; and the majority were so far restrained that they voted this charge not sustained. God would not let *even them*

affix this stain upon His servant. Of the first specification under the second charge there was no proof whatever. It was shown that once during the year Rev. B. T. Roberts was at a general quarterly meeting at the M. E. Church at Albion, of which Brother Stiles was pastor. One evening, after Rev. B. I. Ives preached, B. T. Roberts, by his invitation, exhorted. But in defence of this, it was shown that he had at that time drawn up in due form, a regular exhorter's license! Mr. Roberts was treated simply as an exhorter and nothing more! He was not called upon to perform and did not perform one of the functions of "a minister!"

This second specification was admitted to be *nominally* true. Holley, N. Y., is a large village between Brockport and Albion. There had been no Methodist society and no Methodist preaching there for a number of years. When I was stationed at Brockport, I occasionally preached by invitation at Holley. I went to Albion from Brockport, and still now and then preached in Holley—sometimes in the Academy, and sometimes in the Presbyterian church. After Mr. Stiles went to Albion he kept up these occasional appointments at Holley. The interest increasing, and souls getting converted, Mr. Stiles formed a class,

which, we may add—has grown into a prosperous church, which has built one of the finest edifices in the place. No objection was made, until after the work of expulsion was begun, and "occasion" was sought against Mr. Stiles. Mr. Conable had no appointment at Holley, and never had. His nearest appointment was about three miles away. Mr. Stiles' appointment to preach was generally on a different day and hour from his. Mr. Conable had a small number of members—two or three—living at Holley. But they did not have him make an appointment at their place.

It was not claimed that these members at Holley did not contribute, as usual, to Mr. Conable's support. So that Mr. Stiles, in going to Holley to preach, interfered in no way, either with his appointments or his salary.

It was not attempted to be shown that Mr. Stiles had violated any provision of the discipline. On the contrary, he read from the discipline—from the *rules* for a preachers' conduct: "You have nothing to do but to save souls: therefore spend and be spent in this work; and *go always not only to those that want you, but to those that want you most.*" This was precisely what he had done —nothing more—and nothing less.

On such a charge, thus sustained, the major-

ity voted to expel from *the Genesee Conference* AND THE M. E. CHURCH, Loren Stiles, Jr.,—one of the most devoted, eloquent, gifted, noble-hearted men then in the ministry of that denomination.

Of all the Methodist papers, official or independent, there was but one that spoke out in condemnation of this violent, illegal action. Yet a few years later, when Rev. S. Tyng, Jr. was mildly censured by the authorities of the Protestant Episcopal Church, for preaching in the parish of another clergyman without his consent, the Methodist papers, with much warmth and zeal, condemned such an encroachment upon personal liberty! Yet there was this difference: Mr. Tyng's Church had a plain law, forbidding the act: the Methodist Church had no law forbidding its ministers to do as Mr. Stiles had done. Mr. Tyng preached in the immediate neighborhood of an Episcopal church. There was not a Methodist church or preaching place within three miles of the place where Mr. Stiles preached! Mr. Tyng preached at the regular hours for service. Mr. Stiles preached generally on a week-day evening, when it did not interfere with any preacher—anywhere.

Will the Methodist editors explain *why* it was wrong for the Episcopal Church to cen-

sure Mr. Tyng—and right for the Methodist Episcopal Church to expel Mr. Stiles from the ministry and the church, for the same act—when all the points of difference were in favor of Mr. Stiles?

CASE OF REV. C. D. BURLINGHAM.

We extract the following from: "A statement by C. D. Burlingham to the Genesee Conference, responding to a charge and specifications, preferred against him by the Rev. D. F. Parsons.

BROCKPORT, Oct. 15, 1859.

Charge, '*Contumacy.*'

1st specification: '*In receiving an expelled member of the Genesee Conference, into the church on trial without confession or satisfactory reformation.*'

I received Benjamin T. Roberts on trial, in Pekin, Nov. 7, 1858, in a general society meeting, pursuant to a *unanimous* vote, without his confessing the alleged crime, for which he had been expelled.

My *reasons* for so doing are:

1. I believe that there are exceptional cases, in the application of the rule of discipline referred to, because if the strict letter of the rule must always control in the cases of applicants for admission on trial, then it follows that an *innocent* person, who has been wrongfully expelled, can never be re-admitted into the church. If the "reformation," or moral state of the applicant is satisfactory to the administrator and the society, or if they believe him to be *innocent*, and he meets all the conditions of membership, his admission, I judge is in harmony with the rule.

I understand Bishop Baker to confirm this view:

see Guide Book, page 159, paragraph 9. "When a member or preacher has been expelled, according to our form of discipline, he can not afterward enjoy the privileges of society and of the sacraments in our church, without contrition and satisfactory reformation; but if however, the society becomes convinced of the *innocence* of the expelled member, he may again be received on trial without confession;" the *principle* in the *conclusion*, covering of course both cases, "*member or preacher*," in the premises.

2. I believe that such admission into the church could not remove the ground of his appeal to the General Conference, because that body, I judged, could act in the case, only on those points submitted in the appeal; he being responsible for his subsequent acts to his Conference, should the General Conference reverse the *decision* by which he was expelled.

3. The next day after the expulsion, the appeal having been notified, the question of his admission into the church was discussed informally, by Bishops Janes and Baker, and the presiding elders. The point was not, can he be received by confessing the alleged crime, for of *course that* would remove the ground of his appeal; but the question was, can he be received on trial, and not injuriously affect his appeal. Not one of those seven officers of the church took the position, that there was anything in the Methodistic law to prevent his being received. No one of them, who spake on the subject, was clear in his mind, he said, as to the effect of such an act on his appeal. Those *aged and experienced* presiding elders —for some of them were such,—with the two Bishops, were in doubt on the question, showing at least, that

such a question had not, then, been definitely settled, in the administrative rules of the church, as intimated by our president a few days since.

Subsequently, Bishop Janes, as Brother Roberts informed me, when I first met him in Pekin, said to him, that he had not lost confidence in him, and that he could join the church again or words to that import, leaving that distinct impression on his mind.

I put *this* and *that* together, and connecting both with advice from some eminent ministers, within and without our Conference bounds, and after receiving all the light *then* accessible to me, I received him on trial. A few weeks after, as per letter of Bishop Baker to me several months later, the Episcopal Board met at Chicago, and settled, as I understand, the principle of administrative law, that is to govern in such cases. This decision having been published, at least editorially, and announced by Bishop Simpson, a few days since, we all *now* understand it; though some of the *younger* members of this body have assumed, in their speeches, that *they* had understood it, even before they were admitted into full connection in the Conference, because they had read the book of discipline. But I confess that I was in doubt on the question, a year ago; and, having occasion to act in this case, with such light as dawned upon me, I did what I thought was right and proper.

4. A fourth point in this argument is a case, perfectly analogous, in reference to the principle of receiving a person on trial 'without confession,' etc., of more than ordinary notoriety, that transpired within our Conference bounds. A prominent member was expelled. He appealed. The quarterly

conference, for some informality, sent the case back for a new trial. He was expelled the second time. Under the *instruction and advice* of the deeply experienced presiding elder of the district—a man of profound erudition—this expelled person was received on trial, without confession, in a charge a few miles distant; and then took a letter and joined a new charge, nearer his home, without either changing his residence, or confessing the crime for which he had been expelled. This administration may have been correct—I do not know, because I do not know the whole case; but, if correct, it is so on the ground of my first reason herewith presented; and if correct, then it covers in a moral point of view my act of receiving 'without confession,' etc. Of course, a wrong administration in that case will not justify a wrong one in another case. But when wiser men than I am are allowed thus to practice, without being treated as contumacious, surely I ought to have the benefit of such clemency.

5. After I had learned from an authentic source—Bishop Baker—what was the Episcopal decision that would apply to this case, and might remove the ground of his appeal; after consultation with Brother Roberts, who has expressed from time to time a desire and purpose to prosecute his appeal, and with some eminent ministers who have the confidence of the church, and who may act as his counsel in the case, I have obeyed the implied advice of the Bishop, and granted the request of Brother Roberts, by discontinuing his probationary membership in the same manner he had been received. The conclusion then, from these five points, each and all, is

summed up in few words: There is not—can not be —a *shadow of contumacy*, either in principle, motive, or act. I assert most solemnly, the purity of my intention and motive; and the charaeter of the act is to be judged in the light of the points I have made, especially the first and third. The first covering fully the reception 'without confession,' etc.; and the third covering the reception while the appeal is pending. The fourth point is an illustrative precedent, the benefit of which I am entitled to receive. The fifth point, in connection with all the others, furnishes *evidence* of not a *perverse*, but a *teachable* spirit,—not *resistance* to and *contempt* of, but *submission* and obedience to the rules, and decisions, and authorities of the church.

Second Specification.—'On giving said expelled member license to exhort, at the time of such reception on trial.'

On the recommendation, nearly unanimous, by the same general society meeting that voted for his reception on trial, and on the same occasion, I gave him a license to exhort.

As the discipline recognizes exhorters as members of quarterly conferences; and probationers cannot be members of a quarterly conference; I stated in the certificate I gave him, that he was a probationary member; assuming thereby that a person, suitable in other respects to officiate in the capacity of an exhorter, might do so, before he, as a *member* of the church, could perform official acts, as a member of quarterly conference.

My reasons, then, for giving him such a license, are :

1. That he might, in a regular and orderly way, exhort the people religiously.

2. I believed that he was *really* a probationary member in good standing, legally; and the Bishop's opinion, given five or six days ago, confirms this view; and, therefore, in that respect, there was no impediment in the way.

3. And though the discipline makes no provision for investing probationers with official powers, except it be an implied one, perhaps, indicated by the words, 'member of *society*,' as required in the church relations of a local preacher, (discipline, page 42); and the words, "member of the *class*," in that of an exhorter, (discipline, page 66); a distinction in words, in the two cases, implying, perhaps, we say, that full membership is *required* in the *former case*, but not in the latter. Yet the law of usage,—possibly founded on this distinction that I have noted—allows and sanctions, in some cases, such administration as mine in the case before us: Rev. Bishop H. B. Bascom, D. D., was authorized to exhort, while on trial.

A leading member of the Oneida Conference, eight or ten years a presiding elder, says he has known many similar cases, several under his own administration. And some of the older members of this Conference say they have known numerous instances of the same, from the period of their connection with the church down through its administrative history to the present time. I have known several such instances.

On these grounds, and not contumaciously, I gave B. T. Roberts license to exhort, in the form and manner I have stated. The idea of setting up my own

private judgment in this case, and my personal convictions in opposition and resistance to the solemn decisions of the Conference, when sitting as a court, has never found its way into my thoughts or heart, to be cherished for a moment. My private opinions in this whole case are solely my own property, under God; but my official and administrative acts in the case have been performed in view of my responsibilities to the Conference as a judicial body, to the Bishop, and to the whole church.

If my administration was incorrect under the first or second specification, or both, it is certainly not an error of the heart; and surely, I ought not to be regarded as *contumacious* because I am not wiser: I know I intended to do, and I thought I did, for the reasons stated, just what ought to be done, in view of all my responsibilities.

Third Specification.—'In attending and assisting in a so-called 'General Quarterly Meeting,' held in Ransomville, some time in February last, within the bounds of the East Porter charge, and at the same time of the regular quarterly meeting of said charge.'

On this specification; I say I attended such a meeting at Ransomvile, and the following facts will show that I did not do it *contumaciously* against the Conference, nor contemptuously against the presiding officer of the district, as implied in the specification:

1. In the light of the statement presented, I regarded Brother Roberts as authorized, at that time, to hold religious meetings where there was an opening, with the consent of the people and authorities of the locality; and, therefore, *under such circumstances*, I did not regard it as improper to be associa-

ted with him and others in religious worship.

2. The Wesleyans had invited this meeting to their church; our people, as I understand, having neither church nor preaching appointment in the locality.

3. I never knew or dreamed, until this bill was presented me, that Ransomville was in East Porter charge, having understood that it was in vacant territory, between Wilson and Porter, and about the same distance from Pekin, my charge, as from either of those places.

4. The small pox was prevailing, to some extent, in our place, and our meetings were suspended; and, under such circumstances our brethren deemed it proper to meet with other brethren in some locality where they would violate no church order, and be likely to do some good in the name of the Lord; and I was with them a part of the time to do a little work and to see what such people were doing, as then and now, I can say, I know but little about such meetings from personal observation.

5. This meeting happened to occur on the day of the quarterly meeting of the Porter charge. I had nothing to do in getting up the meeting or fixing the time, but I have good reason to believe the appointment was made in ignorance that the other meeting was to be at the same time. When it became known that the Porter meeting would be at that time, it was too late to change the time of the other; but, as I understood from brethren with whom I conversed, knowing nothing of the localities myself then, that the circuit meeting would probably be held in connection with Youngstown, or at some point six or

eight miles from Ransomville. I judged the one would not interfere with the other; and, therefore, I attended said meeting. It was a source of regret to me that the two meetings were to occur at the same time, for the reason that, possibly, the Porter meeting might be in the eastern part of the circuit, in the more immediate vicinity of Ransomville, and it might be thought that *this* meeting was designed to interfere with that, which was not the case. Of course, there is no occasion for me to stop and try to show that there is here no contumacy in spirit or act. I am not the man to interfere with the pastoral and gospel work of other men, in their respective charges. I generally have more than I can do nearer home; neither can I knowingly and intentionally encourage others to do what I would not do myself. Brethren, I have endeavored to notice and meet every point in the Bill; and though I admit some little partiality for my client, I must say, in all candor, there is not, there cannot be, in your convictions in the case, the shadow of any evidence to sustain the charge; that though all the specifications are nearly literally true, there is not in the case the slightest degree of *contumacy*."

To the mind of every candid person, this must be a complete defence. But the majority of the Conference paid no attention to it, and as they had the votes to do it with, they voted him guilty, and inflicted upon him the highest possible penalty in their power—expulsion from the Conference and the M. E. Church. This was the limit of their ability.

CASE OF REV. WILLIAM COOLEY.

"'I hereby charge Rev. Wm. Cooley with contumacy.

First Specification.—In receiving into his pulpit and treating as a minister an expelled member from this Conference.

Second Specification.—In violating the wishes and requests of his brethren, as expressed by resolutions passed by them at this session of our Conference against affiliating with expelled members from this Conference. J. B. WENTWORTH.

BROCKPORT, Oct. 14, 1859.'

On the first specification, the defense said, "I admit that B. T. Roberts once addressed the people at Kendall village, and J. McCreery did once at West Kendall, from the pulpit. We had a four day's meeting at Kendall; Brother Roberts came to the meeting, but not by my request, and exhorted once. I invited him to take part in the exercises, and to exhort.

Brother McCreery came to a two day's meeting at West Kendall. I did not invite him to come. He went into the pulpit and addressed the people, as he said, on his own authority.

Rev. A. D. Wilbor called.—I am Brother Cooley's presiding elder. I had a conversation with him about receiving expelled ministers. I inquired if he had thus associated with them. He admitted what he has here admitted, in substance; I admonished him. This conversation was since the commencement of the present session of this Conference.

Testimony on the second specification.—The defendant here admitted that he had preached at

Purdy's camp-meeting, but had not taken part in any irregular meeting, as he knew of. He preached, before the resolutions of Conference were passed.

Rev. R. E. Thomas called—Were you present at the *Nazarite camp-meeting down here? I was. Did Brother Cooley take part in it? He sat on the platform; he knelt and prayed.

Rev. C. Strong called.—I was present at Purdy's camp-meeting a few times, as a spectator. Saw the defendant there two or three times. He appeared to be taking part in the exercises during the time of prayer-meeting or when a great deal of noise was being made, in what I should call the general hallooing and clapping concert.

I did not see B. T. Roberts there at the time of the sacrament, but at other times. I saw J. McCreery on the stand. I saw him come forward to the communion. A man I have heard called Purdy seemed to supervise this meeting.

Rev. K. D. Nettleton called.—I was present a part of the time during the sacrament and tent-meeting.

I was a spectator. Saw McCreery partake of the sacrament with the ministers. A man administered the sacrament, at the first invitation, whom Mr. Purdy called a presiding elder of the Oneida Conference by the name of Thurston. Saw defendant and McCreery go forward to the sacrament. Saw defendant take part in the exercises, and also expelled ministers.

Rev. B. F. McNeal called.—I was present at the sacrament on Tuesday evening of this week, as a spectator. Defendant and J. McCreery were there;

*Referring to Fay H. Purdy's Tent Meeting.

I saw defendant, and McCreery, and a large number of ministers go forward to the sacrament, and immediately took my departure. A man they called Thurston presided at the sacrament..

Cross-examined. — There were from twenty to thirty ministers present at the sacrament.

Rev. A. D. Wilbor called.—The tent-meeting was not held by my consent, but against my wishes.

Cross-examined.—I have given no public expression to that effect. I did express my disapprobation at the preachers' meeting at Le Roy. The defendant was not there. I think the notice of the tent-meeting was published in the *Northern Christian Advocate.* I supposed the meeting to be held within the bounds of the Brockport charge.

Rev. E. M. Buck called.—Was Purdy's meeting in the bounds of your charge? Yes. I objected to this meeting to Purdy. I saw the notice of it.

Cross-examined.—I have no personal knowledge that defendant knew of my objections to Purdy's meetings.

Rebutting Testimony.

Rev. A. D. Wilbor called.—I did not inform defendant previous to the commencement of this session of the Conference, that his course was objectionable.

Cross-examined.—I admonished him the second or third day of Conference; it was before his character was arrested.

Rev. A. L. Backus called.—I received Joseph McCreery into the church on probation, the second Sabbath after the adjournment of the last Conference. I dropped him the first Sabbath after the Bergen camp-meeting.

Cross-examined.—I did not license him to exhort or preach, or any thing of that kind."

Direct testimony resumed:

"I did not give public notice that I had dropped him. I did report him dropped by name."

Rev. C. D. Burlingham's testimony, taken in Brother Stiles' trial and admitted in this trial: 'I gave B. T. Roberts license to exhort, having first received him into the church as a probationer, which was the second Sabbath after the last Conference.'"

Soon after his expulsion, the Rev. Wm. Cooley wrote respecting his trial, the following notes:

"1. The second specification was added after the trial was commenced, and altered twice; and at the suggestion of Bishop Simpson was most of it withdrawn, to prevent Brother Purdy's testimony, which would have made his meeting a regular one, because he had Rev. E. M. Buck's consent to hold the meeting when he did.

2. Brother Roberts exhorted at Kendall in the forepart of the Conference year, and the presiding elder, Rev. A. D. Wilbor, was four times on my circuit to hold quarterly meetings during the year, and had opportunities to admonish me of my great error in allowing Brother Roberts to exhort the people to serve God, and never passed a word with me as to this being an irregularity or wrong until the second or third day of this session of Conference. It certainly looks as though the design was not to check irregularities, but to find some occasion against me.

3. When my trial was nearly through, leading Re-

gency ministers came to me, and said if I would locate, I might go out with clean papers, as a local preacher, to preach the Gospel. But I felt I had lived in all good conscience, and had done nothing to forfeit my Conference relations, and could not take any such responsibilities on myself.

4. Great efforts were made by the dominant party in the Conference to get me to subscribe to the "Five Puseyite resolutions," passed by the Conference, with the understanding that if I could do this, my character should pass; but I could not ignore my manhood, and obligations to God to obey him rather than man, so much as to bow down to that idol, set up by men. So I was expelled, first from Conference, and then from the church; but God has been with me every hour since, saving and keeping my soul in glorious freedom, and I am enabled to say, "But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus to testify the Gospel of the grace of God."

"APPEAL OF REV. JOHN A. WELLS.

To the members of the M. E. Church and all persons who respect the rights of humanity and religion.

Dear Brethren:—Allow me to present to you a candid statement of the facts in reference to my expulsion from the M. E. Church.

The Journal of the Genesee Conference for Oct. 13, 1859 contains the following record:

'Resolved. That John A. Wells be expelled from the Genesee Conference and from the M. E. Church.'

The charges which furnished the occasion for the above action are as follows:

'I hereby charge Rev. J. A. Wells with—

1st. Contumacy—in recognizing as a minister, by admitting to his pulpit, and holding religious meetings in connection with B. T. Roberts, an expelled member from this Conference.

2d. Disobedience to the order of the church, in going into the bounds of other brethren's charges, and holding religious meetings.'

(Signed,) S. M. HOPKINS.

Dated, BROCKPORT, Oct. 1, 1859.

It would be tame, indeed, for me to say that I am dissatisfied with the above action of Conference. A blow has been struck at the vitals of Christian liberty. I do not feel that I am guilty of contumacy, or disobedience to the order of the church; neither if I were guilty to the extent of the specifications could I believe that the severest penalty known in ecclesiastical discipline ought to be inflicted on me. I now make my appeal to you, and hope to be received. and treated in accordance with the verdict which your candor and religion shall render.

I admitted on my trial, that I had permitted B. T. Roberts to speak in my pulpit; and that I had attended and took part in religious meetings conducted by him. Also, that I had preached in a few instances within the bounds of other brethren's charges. There was nothing material proved in addition to this.

I showed in my defense,

1st. That B. T. Roberts, since his expulsion had been admitted to the M. E. Church on trial, and

licensed to exhort, and as such I had received him. Bishop Simpson had decided that an error or irregularity on the part of an administrator of discipline does not invalidate the title to membership of a person received into the church. So that Brother Roberts was legally and properly a member of the M. E. Church on trial. Whether his license to exhort given him by Rev. C. D. Burlingham, he being recommended to do so by the unanimous vote of the society at Pekin, was valid or not, according to the letter of the law, it was at least a good reason in favor of my allowing him to speak. I could not forbid a man to speak in my pulpit who came with such recommendations. If there is contumacy in this, it must consist in a refusal of absolute subjection to the will of the Buffalo Regency, and not in resistance to the reasonable authority of the church.

I showed in my defense,

2. That not one of the preachers on whose charges I had preached, had ever by word or by letter, intimated to me that they were displeased with my preaching within the bounds of their charges; and also, that my presiding elder had never admonished me never to do so. If I was expelled for that, it certainly was a crime that none of the men who claim to be injured thought enough of to speak to me about it, though months elapsed between its commission and the Conference.

I contend that I am expelled from the Church for no crime whatever; either against the word of God, or the Methodist discipline. In these things for which I was expelled, I have not violated my obligations to

God, nor transcended my rights as a Methodist preacher.

I am not blamable in receiving Brother Roberts as I did. I received him and treated him as an exhorter. It was not proved that I did more than this. His relation to the church, and the license which he held, fully entitled him, according to the discipline and usages of Methodism, to all the respect which I paid him. But I had higher reasons than these for doing as I did. I had for many years regarded Brother Roberts as a devoted servant of God, eminent for his usefulness. I really believed that his expulsion from the Church was only the result of hatred aroused by his faithful denunciation of sin, and that he was, in the sight of heaven, as much a servant of God and a minister of the Gospel after his expulsion, as before it. I could not do less than receive him. To have forbidden him to speak in my pulpit, would have been a sin against God that I would not bear in the judgment, for all worlds.

2. I have not sinned in preaching within the territories claimed by other preachers. Simply preaching the Gospel is all that I did. I was not charged with doing more. So that the solution of the question, Has one preacher any right to preach on another's territory? will make me guilty or innocent. The commission which God gave me is, "Go into all the world." I was ordained an elder in the church of God. Now if there is anything in our Church order, limiting my right to preach to one small charge, and shutting me off from any particular place, let it be shown. In joining the itinerant ranks of Methodism, we do so far surrender our right of choosing

our field of labor as to allow the president of the Conference to appoint where we shall preach. But we do not so surrender our rights that he, or any other power on earth can appoint where we can not preach. To make such a surrender would be treason against God. The discipline provides penalties for the preacher who refuses to go to his work, but it is nowhere made a crime to preach the Gospel off from his charge.

I have foreborne to speak for others who are my companions in the same tribulation, partly because I left the seat of the Conference before the adjournment, and do not know how far the work of decapitation had proceeded, and partly because I prefer that they should speak for themselves. The charges against eight preachers were nearly the same as those on which I was condemned, viz: contumacy and disobedience to the order of the church.

The Conference, on the second day of its session, adopted a series of resolutions which amounted to an *ex post facto law*, according to which every preacher's character was to pass. Every preacher who was supposed during the year past to have violated the code contained in the resolutions, had his character arrested. No man could pass until he had testified his penitence for having violated them, (before they existed) and promised to observe them in future.

To what extent this persecution will be carried, the future alone can reveal. The majority of the Conference are evidently determined, by raising the mad dog cry of "Nazaritism," to drive out of the church all who have religion enough not to endorse their measures. What others may do I cannot tell, but as

for myself, I am yet firmly attached in heart to the M. E. Church. I believe her doctrines and love her discipline. I have appealed to the General Conference. I shall get back into the Church again if I can.

BELFAST, OCT. 20, 1859. J. A. WELLS.

Of these expulsions, the editor of the *Northern Independent* spoke in brave, just terms of condemnation in an editorial of Oct. 20, 1859:

"THE GENESEE CONFERENCE.

Last week we referred to the trials going on in this Conference, and expressed an opinion that they were pernicious. It is now our painful duty to record the result of these most infatuated proceedings. Up to the time of this writing, four of the best members of the Conference have been expelled, both from the Conference and the church. We have known ecclesiastical blunders before, but never one so great as this. We do not care to repeat what we have already said of these trials, nor do we wish to enter into the controversy further than to note what we think to be a very dangerous perversion of Conference authority.

Every man of common sense knows that contumacy is not necessarily a crime; and hence if the defendant had been guilty of all that was charged upon him, there was no occasion for his expulsion. Contumacy is often a virtue. It may be a minister's duty to comply with the rules imposed by a majority, or it may not; all will depend on the character of the rules—if right, he may keep them; if not right, he is bound to disregard them, or peril his soul. When Conference action is just and wise, it becomes

obligatory; but when it is unjust and foolish, the obligation ceases. Else an Annual Conference, becoming perverse, might decree that all its members should abstain from praying, and the decree would be binding. As such a conclusion is absurd, we are obliged to reject the premises on which it rests, and hold that Conferences have power only so far as they keep to the right. So much for the merits of the case, even if contumacy had been among the things forbidden by the church. But the fact is, we have not, and never had any rule making contumacy a sin. It is not an offence, either named, or contemplated by our discipline. It is a crime unheard of in the annals of Methodism—a miserable aping of the most questionable and dangerous perogatives ever exercised by secular authority.

That a preacher may be expelled for 'improper tempers, words, or actions,' is true, and if the charge had been made for either or all of these things, it would at least have been right in form, and might have been tried on its merits. But a trial for contumacy is quite another thing, and altogether beyond the record. In making these trials rest upon this basis, the Conference has, in fact, established a new law, and given sovereign power to every straggling resolution that may chance to be passed. Not to obey a perverse resolution, would be very far from evincing 'improper tempers, words or actions,' but it would certainly be 'contumacy.' Hence the unpardonable liberty taken in departing from the words of the discipline, and manufacturing this new test of character.

This style of administration assumes an importance

far beyond the individual instances of decapitation which have already occurred. Acting on the same principle, the Genesee Conference, or any other Conference, has only to pass a resolution that no member shall take the *Northern Independent*, or act as agent for it, and the work is done—thenceforth, whoever gets a subscriber or receives the paper into his house, is guilty of contumacy, and destined to be expelled. Thus this unfounded assumption seizes upon the press, sweeps away every vestige of personal liberty, and makes the minority of the Conference the veriest slaves. It is true, the Conference has not yet given the principle on which it is acting this particular application, but how soon it may, none can tell. At this session, the members have been forbidden to attend all meetings not regularly appointed, as will be seen from the third and fifth resolutions of the following series:

'Resolved, 1st. That the safety and prosperity of a Church can only be maintained by a solemn deference to its councils and discipline, as legitimately determined and executed.

2d. That we consider the admission of expelled ministers, whether traveling or local, to our pulpits, and associating with them and assisting them as ministers, until they have, by due process, as described in the discipline, been restored to the fellowship of the church, as subversive of the integrity and government of the church, directly tending to the production of discord and division and every evil work.

3d. That we disapprove and condemn the practice of certain members of this Conference, in holding in an irregular way, or in countenancing by taking part

in the services, of camp-meetings, or other meetings thus irregularly held.

4th. That in the judgment of this Conference, it is highly improper for one preacher to go into another preacher's charge and appoint meetings, or attend those that may be appointed by others in opposition to the wishes of the preacher in charge, or the presiding elder.

5th. That if any member of this Conference be found guilty of disregarding the opinions and principles expressed in the above resolutions, he shall be held to answer to this Conference for the same."

Referring to the resolutions, he says:

"These resolutions are well enough, considered as merely declarative or advisory, but regarded as the ultimate law of the church, they are a grievous outrage on the rights of every member of an Annual Conference. Annual Conferences may advise, and may execute laws already made, but they are not law making bodies, and consequently cannot pass a resolution having the force of law. But if a man be expelled for non-conformity to a rule made by an Annual Conference, then is an Annual Conference, in the very highest sense, a law making body. An Annual Conference may expel a preacher for violating the discipline, but not for violating one of its own rules. Were it not for this necessary restriction, each Annual Conference could make laws *ad libitum*, and the law making power of the General Conference would be a nullity. Surely, in view of the above resolutions, every Methodist preacher may ask, Have we an organic law? Or, are we at the mercy of a bare majority, however obtained and however disposed?

If a simple Conference resolution is law, we are without a constitution, and in that respect worse off than a temperance society, or any other voluntary association whatever. It will be conceded by all, that an Annual Conference has no more right to make laws than a quarterly conference, and what would be thought if a quarterly conference should pass a series of resolutions, to be kept by all its members, under pain of expulsion? Such a thing is unprecedented, and yet would be quite as legal as the penalties threatened in the foregoing resolutions.

Are we then, says an objector, to endure the evils complained of in the foregoing resolutions? Not necessarily. There are other and milder remedies than expulsion. But even if the General Conference itself should make a rule prohibiting the things forbidden by these Genesee Conference resolutions, we should doubt the utility of the measure. Some things are better for being let alone. Not many ages since, the civil law undertook to regulate religious opinion; but after much blood had been shed to no purpose, it was found that toleration was better than legislation. So also in the operations of Methodism, it may perhaps be found that forbearance is a better cure than law.

It may be a sin, and a sufficient cause for expulsion, to treat an expelled minister as though he were yet a minister, but our Church has nowhere affirmed the fact. All the discipline says on the subject is, that *after* an appeal has been had—mark that—a "person so expelled shall have no privilege of society or sacrament in our Church, without confession, contrition, and satisfactory reformation." Here is the sum total

of the penalty to be inflicted, but none of it is fairly due until the appeal has been heard, for until then the trial is not ended—the case has not yet reached the highest court. In civil law, the execution of the sentence awaits the action of the appellate court. We do not hang a man because the jury finds him guilty, but wait till the final hearing of the case before the highest tribunal. Following this analogy, a minister expelled by an Annual Conference, is at most barely suspended, and though not eligible to an appointment, may, nevertheless, not be wholly excluded from the courtesies due to ministerial character. It was this view of the case, joined with a full conviction of the injustice of the sentence, and modified also by the fact of the actual readmission of the the expelled persons into the church, which induced treatment of which complaint is here made. What relates to invading other charges is too trivial for notice.

These cases of expulsion will, no doubt, go up to the ensuing General Conference, where they are quite certain to be reversed, if they can be fairly heard. Some have intimated that the expelled brethren must be very cautious, and do all honor to the act of their expulsion, by remaining silent until their appeal is acted upon. We are glad that even in this respect there will be no little breadth to the question. If, after their expulsion, they labor on—not as Methodists, but as men—and do what good they can, it ought not to be imputed to them as a crime, nor in anywise prejudice their appeal. They still have what God and nature gave them—the right to speak and to act as men and as Christians ; Methodism takes

away only what it gave. The gift of life, the divine commission, and the assurance of pardon, are all from a higher source—a source over which Conferences have no control.

We are convinced that a principle is involved in the administration of that Conference which, if unchecked, must be fatal to Methodism. Our Annual Conferences would be converted into so many petty tyrannies, alike injurious to men and offensive to God. Majorities would become simply machines for the extirpation of progressive sentiment.

Since the above was written, we have received the following from Brother Roberts: 'A resolution was passed on Saturday against any of the members of Conference acting as agent for the *Northern Independent.*' Now, we all know what such a resolution means in the Genesee Conference.—Every preacher who dare act as agent for us, will be expelled for contumacy. Thus the war has commenced openly. It will now be known whether Methodists are slaves or freemen.

We give the resolution relating to the *Independent*, with the comments of one of the corresponding editors:

"'Resolved, That we disapprove of any member of this Conference acting as agent for the *Northern Independent*, or of writing for its columns, or in any way giving it encouragement and support.'

The above is of 'striking significance,' from the fact that the 'regency' has recently put on General Conference authority, and has become a law making body. Every man who disobeys this resolution, does

so at the peril of his ministerial office, and his membership in the M. E. Church. It would be as clear a case of 'contumacy' as any for which the brethren were expelled, to whom we have referred. The "regency," be it remembered, are legislators, jurors, judges and executioners, and wo be to any member of the Genesee Conference who shall be found in any way giving it (the *Independent*) encouragement and support.'

Dr. Hibbard is in raptures over the 'extraordinary proceedings of Genesee Conference,' and especially over the passage of the resolution against the *Independent*. 'That was manfully said,' he exclaims, 'it ought to inspire all its sister Conferences,' etc. It will inspire with supreme disgust, all sister Conferences who are not steeped to the lips in pro-slaveryism and popery."

Mr. Stiles, having attended the Methodist Theological Seminary at Concord, and having been about a good deal, one year stationed at Cincinnati—had a more correct idea than the other expelled preachers, of the justice to be looked for at the General Conference. He said it was of no use to take an appeal, and he should not waste the time and endure the strain of prosecuting an appeal; for he had no hope whatever that the General Conference would do justice in the matter.

He returned to Albion at the urgent call of the people. Members of the church and congregation, who "loved righteousness and hated

iniquity," rallied around him. They were so largely in the majority that, according to equity and according to the laws of the State, they were entitled to the church property; but they chose rather to give no cause of complaint, and "took joyfully the spoiling of their goods." His friends gave up the church property. With great expedition the people put up a large edifice for him at Albion, where he lived and labored, and died in the warm affections of the community.

He assisted in forming the discipline of the Free Methodist Church, and gave his hearty efforts to secure the election of its first General Superintendent.

He was of too sensitive a nature to endure the strain to which the indignities he suffered at the hands of the Genesee Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church had subjected him.

He was taken down with the typhoid fever, and the disease assumed from the first a malignant character. He was greatly blessed in his soul when he was taken sick, and to this he often referred, even during the spells of delirium. One evening, as we were watching with him, he thought he was in the hands of a secret society committee, and cried out, "Brother Roberts, I want you should go out

and tell the committee that I am ready to die in two hours, or one hour, or even this minute. The Lord has greatly blessed me and I shall go straight to glory." The day before he died, he said to the physician, "ALL IS RIGHT." He grew gradually weaker, and, without a struggle, on the 7th of May, 1863 his pure spirit passed away to the realms of bliss.

His funeral was attended by an immense congregation—the large church being filled, and hundreds standing outside, unable to gain admission.

The Rev. William Hosmer, his fellow hero in the battle against all sin and wrong, preached an eloquent, impressive sermon from the text, "*He endured as seeing Him who is invisible.*—Heb. xi, 27.

The concluding part of his sermon was as follows :

"We have no words adequate to this occasion. He who lies before us, stricken down in his prime, was a living illustration of greatness produced by the presence of God. He did and dared, as none do or dare who are not conscious of Divine aid. Eminent as he was, in intellectual ability, and surpassingly eloquent in his pulpit ministrations, he never forgot himself for a moment, nor appeared other than the most humble of men. Anxious only to do good, absorbed with the duties of his high commission, and admonished by the feebleness of his system, that his period

of labor might be short, he gave the world an example of self-abnegation and tireless industry worthy of an apostle. When the Genesee Conference withdrew its sanction from his ministry he felt no lack; God was still with him and he asked no more.

Besides, the pressure which was upon him—the 'woe is upon me if I preach not the Gospel'—was much too great to admit of interruption from slight causes. His call was from above, and he well knew that men could not revoke it. Following the apostolic example, he preferred to obey God rather than man. With others of his fellow laborers who had been similarly maltreated, he entered at once upon new church relations of such a character as promised to help and not hinder his efforts for the salvation of men. Here he soon found that the things which had happened to him, 'had fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the Gospel.' The Chief Shepherd and Bishop of souls, instead of granting a discharge from service, had done for him what had previously been done for Luther and Wesley, namely, enlarged his pastorate by removing the trammels of ecclesiastical authority.

How well, how successfully, how self-consumingly he labored in the extended field thus providentially opened, you all know. You know also that amid the severe trials to which he was subjected, his reputation was stainless—not even the breath of malice itself could soil a character so essentially pure. Mysterious indeed that we come to-day to lay in the grave one so well prepared to live, one so rich in gifts, so useful, we had almost said indispensable—to the church and to his family. But the ways of God

are not the ways of man; and what we know not now, we shall know hereafter. We must not complain that his sun went down at noon—rather let us glory that it sunk in the full splendor of meridian brightness. That life which has afforded an opportunity to do and to suffer so much, can not be regarded as short, nor can that death which simply opens the gate of heaven, be considered as premature."

Charles D. Burlingham, at the time of his expulsion, had been an effective preacher of the Genesee Conference nineteen years. For four years he had filled with acceptability the office of presiding elder. He was a preacher of more than ordinary ability, original in his style, clear in his reasonings, and happy in the use of illustrations. He had labored beyond his physical ability, and was left broken in constitution, with a large, dependent family, and no means for their support.

He was restored to the Conference by means which showed the injustice of the M. E. Church almost as forcibly as his expulsion. He continued to preach for fifteen years, yet never regained his former vigor and strength; but seemed a crushed, broken-hearted man. He died in 1874.

William Cooley had been seventeen years a diligent, faithful and acceptable preacher. He is a quiet, peaceable, unoffending, upright man.

He is a clear, Scriptural, searching preacher, and generally has had good revivals on the charges on which he has labored.

He is now preaching in the Free Methodist Church in Iowa.

Rev. J. A. Wells had been seven years a successful preacher in the Genesee Conference. He was a good, able preacher, studious in his habits, entirely given up to the work of God, a man of honest intention and unbending integrity. He is now, we believe, pastor of the Presbyterian church at Springville.

THE LAYMEN'S CONVENTION held its second annual session in the Baptist church, at Albion, Nov. 1st and 2d, 1859. Hon. Abner I. Wood was chosen President; George W. Holmes, John Billings, Jonathan Handly, Edward P. Cox and S. C. Springer, Vice-presidents; and S. K. J. Chesbrough, Stephen S. Rice, Wm. Hart and Thomas Sully, Secretaries.

The Convention said:

"When we met last year in Convention, we trusted that the preachers, whose course was the cause of our assembling, would be led to repentance and reformation. But our hopes have been blasted. The Scripture is still true, which saith, that 'evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.'

That we have the right to take into consideration

the public acts of a public body to which we are intimately related, cannot be denied. That such consideration has become our duty we are well satisfied. Our Lord has given us the test, 'By their fruits ye shall know them.' What has been the fruits for the past year of the party in Conference, known as the 'Buffalo Regency?" Have they been such as we should expect from men of God? We are pained to be obliged to bear testimony to the fact that some occupying the place of Methodist ministers have used their influence, and bent their energies to put down under the name of 'fanaticism,' what we feel confident is the work of the Holy Spirit.

The course pursued by some of our preachers, in expelling from the church, members in good standing, and high repute for their Christian character, because they attended our Convention in December last, we look upon as cruel and oppressive, and it calls for our most decided disapproval. What does the right of private judgment amount to, if we can not exercise it without bringing down on our heads these ecclesiastical anathemas? To our brethren who have been so used, we extend our cordial sympathy, and we assure them that our confidence in them has not diminished on account of their names being cast out as evil for the Son of man's sake. The action of the majority, in expelling from the Conference and the church, four able and devoted ministers, and locating two others, upon the most frivolous pretexts, is so at variance with the principles of justice and our holy Christianity, as to cause minor offences to be aggravated, when they would otherwise be overlooked. The charge against each was the convenient one of

'contumacy.' The specifications were in substance, the receiving as ministers those who were expelled at the previous session of the Conference, and for preaching in the bounds of other men's charges. Where in the Bible, or in the discipline, is 'contumacy,' spoken of as a crime? It is a charge generally resorted to for the purpose of oppression. Let whatever the dominant power in the church may be pleased to call 'contumacy' be treated as a crime, religious liberty is at an end. There is not an honest man in the Conference but may be expelled for 'contumacy,' whenever, by any means, a majority can be obtained against him. There is not a member of the M. E. Church, who acts from his own convictions of right, but may be excommunicated for "contumacy," whenever his preacher is disposed to do so. Let some mandate be issued that cannot in conscience be obeyed, and the guilt of contumacy is incurred. The Regency party not only expelled devoted servants of God for contumacy, but did it under the most aggravated circumstances. An Annual Conference possesses no power to make laws. A resolution with a penalty affixed for its violation, is to all intents and purposes a law. The Regency passed resolutions at the last session of the Conference, and then tried and expelled men for violating them months before they had an existence! That any honest man can entertain any respect for such judicial action is utterly impossible. The specifications were in keeping with the charge. The first was for recognizing as ministers, the expelled members of the Conference. The charge was not for recognizing them as Methodist ministers; for the expelled brethren did not claim to have au-

thority from the church. They acted simply by virtue of their commission from God. If a man believes he is called of God to preach, and God owns and blesses his labors, has he not the right thus to warn sinners to flee the wrath to come? At the second Conference held by Wesley, it was asked, 'Is not the will of our governors a law?' The answer was emphatic—'no—not of any governors, temporal or spiritual. Therefore if any Bishop wills that I should not preach the Gospel, his will is no law to me. But what if he produced a law against your preaching? I am to obey God rather than man.' This is the language of the founder of Methodism. How it rebukes the arrogant, popish assumptions of some of the pretended followers of Wesley.

The second specification was for preaching in other men's charges without their consent.

Where is there anything wrong in this?—What precept of the Bible, what rule of the discipline is violated? Does it not evidence the faithful minister of Jesus, burning with love for souls, rather than the criminal deserving the highest censure of the church? Methodist ministers are bound by their obligations to serve the charges to which they are appointed by the Conference: *but they do not promise that they will not preach any where else.* On the contrary, the commission from Christ reads, 'Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature.' The discipline says, 'You have nothing to do but to save souls; therefore, spend and be spent in this work; *and go always, not only to those who want you, but to those who want you most. Observe, it is not your business only to preach so many times, and to take*

care of this or that society, but to save as many as you can; to bring as many sinners as you can to repentance, and with all your power to build them up in that holiness, without which they cannot see the Lord.' On this ground, were these men of God, as we esteem them, Revs. Loren Stiles, Jr., John A. Wells, Wm. Cooley, and Charles D. Burlingham excommunicated by the Regency party of the Genesee Conference at its last session. Fidelity to God will not allow us to quietly acquiesce in such decisions. It is urged that we must respect the action of the church. But what is the church? Our 13th article of religion says, 'The visible church of God is a congregation of faithful men, in which the pure word of God is preached, and the sacraments duly administered.' *The ministers then are not 'the church.'* If ministers wish to have their acts respected, they must, like other men, perform *respectable* actions.

These repeated acts of expulsions, wrong as they are in themselves, deserve the stronger condemnation from the fact, scarcely attempted to be disguised, that THE OBJECT *is to prevent the work of holiness from spreading among us—to put down the life and power of godliness in our churches, and to inaugurate in its stead the peaceable reign of a cold and heartless formalism.*—in short, to do away with what has always been a distinctive feature of Methodism. If the work which the men who were expelled both this year and last, have labored, and not without success to promote, be 'fanaticism,' then has Methodism from the beginning been 'fanaticism.' Our attachment to Methodism was never stronger than it is at

present, and our sympathy and our means shall be given to the men who toil and suffer to promote it. We can not abandon, at the bidding of a majority, the doctrines of Methodism, and the men who defend them.

The course of the Regency in shielding members of their faction, create the suspicion that a stronger motive than any referred to lies at the foundation of their remarkable action,—*the principle of self preservation.* It may be that the guilty, to prevent exposure, deem it necessary to expel the innocent. Their refusal to entertain charges; and their prompt acquittal of one of their leaders, though clearly proved guilty of a crime sufficient to exclude him from heaven, look strongly in that direction. The recent public exposure in another Conference of one of the founders of the Regency party, who took a transfer, to escape from well founded suspicion, shows how a minister may pursue, unconvicted, a career of guilt for years, when '*shielded*' by secret society influences, and willing to be the servile tool of the majority. —For the evils complained of we see no other remedy within our reach, than the one we adopted last year:—WITHHOLD SUPPLIES. To show that such a remedy is 'constitutional' and 'loyal,' we have only to refer to the 'proceedings' of the Convention of last year and to the authorities therein qnoted."

The Convention unanimously passed resolutions expressing the utmost confidence in the preachers who had been expelled, assuring them of the sympathy of the people, and encouraging them to "continue to labor for

the promotion of the work of God and the salvation of souls, and added:

"That, in order to keep our people who are being oppressed by the misrule of the dominant faction in the Genesee Conference from being scattered, and finally lost to our church, we recommend our brethren in the ministry to gather our people into Bands, and to encourage them to union of action and effort in the work of the Lord."

A committee was also appointed to prepare a memorial to the General Conference asking for a correction of the abuses complained of in the action of the Genesee Conference.

A few weeks after this LAYMEN'S CONVENTION was held, a letter was circulated among the so-called "Regency" preachers, encouraging them in their policy. To the copy that has been furnished us, no name is appended; but the author of the original is understood to be no less a personage than a Bishop. We do not assume to know, but we give a copy of the letter, and the reader can form his own judgment in the case. To us it certainly reads as if written by one who felt that he had a right to speak with authority.

"January 3, 1860.

DEAR BROTHER:

A happy New Year to you. * * My advice is *decided* that you should remove every leader, who

takes part in the Albion Convention, or any of a similar character. *Do not be deterred* by threats of difficulty, or of leaving the church. Better have no members than disorderly ones. The world is wide. Sinners are numerous. We will go with the Gospel to them, and God will give us fruit. I repeat then, by all means, stand firmly by the action of the church. *Remove* every leader who arrays himself against it, no matter what may be his *influence*, or how great his usefulness, or how it may affect your congregation, or how it will result in the end.

As to private members, I would do nothing while they do not engage in opposition meetings. But if they get up and sustain meetings for expelled preachers, or resist church action, I would cite them to trial, after proper admonition.

Let me again assure you, that the safety of the church is in straight forward action."

Yours truly,

CHAPTER XII.

EXPULSION BY THE WHOLESALE.

At the Brockport Conference the most vigorous measures to exterminate "Nazaritism" from the Conference, were adopted.

Thomas Carlton especially distinguished himself for the violence of his denunciations. "These Nazarites," he exclaimed, "are like Canada thistles, you cut one down and ten will spring up in its place." But we will let Rev. C. D. Burlingham describe his speech:

"One* of their leading champions, whose efficiency in originating and perpetuating the Conference difficulties is unsurpassed, and from whose official position, decency if not dignity might be expected, while making a speech, in the 'height of his argument,' exclaimed with a perfect yell, that he 'had rather meet a thousand devils than three Nazarites'—that is to say, in the estimation of this minister of Jesus, and General Conference official, one Nazarite is worse than three hundred and thirty-three and one third devils! But this was said in defence of the church! Will not such zeal in her behalf be duly appreciated, and coveted honors be conferred accordingly? All such eloquence was met by the minority, as it should have been, by silent contempt.

*Outline History, page 52.

The chair very seldom saw proper to rebuke this kind of declamation."

Inspired by such exhortations, and by the example of the Conference, and by the official letter, (published at the close of the last chapter), the Regency preachers went to their appointments determined to root out from the societies the uncompromising adherents of old-fashioned Methodism. We can give but a faint idea of their operations.

On Kendall circuit was a number of Methodist families of more than ordinary intelligence. They had a clear idea of the doctrines and usages of Methodism. The doctrine of holiness had been taught and enforced, and many professed to enjoy the blessing, and honored their profession by their lives. A preacher was sent from the Brockport Conference to this circuit to bring them to subjection. He had many difficulties to encounter, but he faced them with a perseverance worthy of a better cause. Nearly all the officials and the leading members were opposed to the party to which he had gone over, and were in sympathy with the preachers who had been unjustly expelled.

His first move was to get control of the quarterly conference. This is easily done in the M. E. Church in which the quarterly conference is substantially the creation of the

preacher, who appoints all the leaders, nominates the stewards, and licenses the exhorters, by whom it is mainly composed. He put in new leaders, and, in order to get more leaders than there were other members of the quarterly conference, he appointed two leaders to one class. When the quarterly conference came together, he moved that the board of stewards be declared vacant. By the aid of his leaders he easily carried it. He then put in his own followers as stewards.

Then the preacher moved that several leading members who were known to stand opposed to the crushing-out policy of the Conference be declared withdrawn. This was also carried. In vain did these members protest that they did not withdraw, and did not intend to. The preacher read them out "withdrawn." Henceforth they were denied the privileges of members in the Methodist Episcopal Church! This was an improvement on the farce of going through the form of a trial. What need of witnesses when the verdict is made up beforehand without the slightest regard to testimony? Why call a jury for the sole purpose of pronouncing guilty whoever the judge arraigns? So, even the forms of justice were dispensed with, and by the most bare-faced despotism many were turned out of churches of which

they had been the pioneers; and from houses of worship which their own money had built.

At East Otto, Rev. A. L. Chapin, expelled from the church, Dewey Tefft, Niles Tefft, E. S. Woodruff and Otis Bacon, an exhorter. Mr. Chapin was one of the most violent adherents of the "Regency party." His admission to the Conference had been opposed by the salvation preachers on the ground that, though he had ability, he lacked religion. His zeal, fired by gratitude and revenge, knew no bounds. He called together the official members of the circuit. He made a flaming address—told them that the discipline knows no members who would not pay; and with their aid he made out an assessment of what each one should pay, or meet the penalty of exclusion from the church. He assured them very emphatically, that if any one divulged the doings of that meeting, it would be considered just cause for expulsion.

He appointed a time when he would meet the class in the Tefft neighborhood. They came together at the time appointed.

They had a plain talk all around. The Teffts were men of means, intelligence and courage. They had come to the country when it was a wilderness—had been familiar with wild beasts, and were not to be frightened by

the ravings of a preacher into acting contrary to their convictions. The whole class refused to support the preacher, except upon his "contrition, confession and proper amendment."

Mr. Chapin called another official meeting. In it, the first thing he did was to demand who had *published* the doings of their last official meeting. Mr Bacon said he did not know who had *published* the proceedings, but he himself had told one man what was done.

Mr. Chapin, greatly enraged, shook his fist in his face, and said with great force, repeatedly, "Who ever heard the like?" Mr. Bacon replied, "I did not know as an official meeting was a secret association, but if it is, the sooner you remove me from it the better it will be for you."

In the official meeting, it was decided to bring the refractory members to trial.

The work of expulsion was begun soon after. To the charges which had been usually made against the so called "Nazarites" last year, was added that of "taking and circulating the *Northern Independent*". In Mr. Bacon's case was added a specification of words used in debate in the official meeting—and of preaching in a remote neighborhood when the preacher forbade him. Mr. Chapin wished to

punish the people of that neighborhood for "contumacy," by cutting them off from all religious privileges. But Mr. Bacon would not assist him in his work of proscription.

During the trial of Dewey Tefft, Mr. Chapin was so arrogant and overbearing that the manhood of one who came to the trial as one of his adherents, revolted. Rising to his feet greatly excited, in thundering tones, Mr. Scott demanded, addressing Mr. Chapin:

"Who are you?"

"The grandson of Ethan Allen?" replied Chapin, rising to his feet.

"How mightily the race has degenerated," replied Scott. "You may be a smart man, but you are not smart enough to be judge, jury, prosecutor, and all, in one case. Now take your proper place and keep it. I want to see fair play."

For a time the wildest excitement prevailed.

The result of these trials, like all the rest of this class, being pre-determined, all who were tried were, as a matter of course, turned out of the church.

Mr. Chapin in pronouncing sentence took care to add that they were not expelled for any breach of the rules of morality or religion—but for a "violation of our rules."

At Asbury Church, near LeRoy, Rev. S. M. Hopkins carried on the work of expulsion.

Against Mr. Cyrus Sperry, one of the most substantial, upright of men, was prosecuted a long list of charges and specifications, covering over two pages of foolscap, taken from the proceedings of the Laymen's Convention. He was expelled. Martin See-

kins, Hiram Huested, and Sylvester Near—all reliable men and Christians, were expelled on similar charges. Mr. Seekins was at work in his harvest field when he was summoned before the church tribunal to answer charges which were then first presented to him. He asked a delay of one hour. This was refused. The next year Rev. J. B. Lankton went to this circuit, and finished up the work. Mrs. Olive Sperry was expelled on a charge of "Contempt and disobedience to the order and discipline of the M. E. Church, by attending, and being interested in favor of a seditious meeting, on the 9th of August last at the meeting house, and voting for some or all of the resolutions there passed, which were violently rebellious against the discipline and government of the M. E. Church." The resolutions were to the effect that they would exercise their right as Methodists, of withholding support from those who, as they believed, had showed themselves unworthy of support.

Mr. Lankton expelled some fourteen or fifteen on substantially the same charges.

On the Tonawanda and Ridgeville circuit, Rev. B. F. McNeal adopted the policy which had proved so successful in other places. He removed John Corliss and Anthony Ames, who had been class leaders for years, from their office. At the next quarterly conference, the presiding elder, Rev. P. Woodworth, decided that Tristram Corliss, superintendent of the sabbath school at Pendleton, was not a member of the official board, because Tonawanda was the first society. They then created a board of stewards composed of those who would vote as the preacher dicta-

ted. On the following Sunday, the Rev. Mr. McNeal without their consent, and without any notice that he intended to do it, read out as withdrawn, Anthony Ames and John Corliss, leaders; Tristram Corliss, Sabbath school superintendent; W.R.Hecox, J. Hunt and Henry Kayner, stewards,and their wives; M. Folger and wife, and Mrs. Henry Pickard.

On the Belfast circuit, Rev. J. W. Reddy, who had been forced to locate at the Brockport Conference, was tried and expelled on a charge of evil speaking, in saying that the Genesee Conference had expelled four of its holiest members for nothing, and also for disobedience to the order and discipline of the church, in holding separate religious meetings at the same time of the regular meetings in the church.

When Brother Reddy was labored with on the charges, he said that if he said these men were expelled by Conference for "nothing," he did not mean to say so; that the meaning he wished to convey was, that they were expelled for no crime, but for standing up for the truth and for earnest Christianity.

On the 12th of March, the charges were stated to Brother Reddy, with the specifications, verbally; and he was cited to trial in the same way, at the quarterly conference to be held the ensuing Saturday. He then asked for a written copy of the charges and specifications, that he might be able to prepare his defence. This was denied him by the preacher in charge, who said that he could and would bring him to trial, without any written charges. After the religious services of the quarterly meeting on Saturday, a copy of the charges was handed to Brother Reddy, and the Conference immediately met, (not in the

church, as usual, but in the parlor of the parsonage, which was barely sufficient to admit the official members, to the exclusion of the private members, with one exception,) and within half an hour proceeded to the trial. Before this, however, that the proceedings might be harmonious, four class-leaders, and one steward, who were supposed to have some sympathy with the accused, were removed.

Brother Reddy was arraigned, and pleading not guilty, asked for an adjournment of the case, in order that he might have time to secure counsel, and prepare his defence. This request was refused. The form of trial was then gone through with, the accused found guilty, condemned, and expelled.

There were still left in the Genesee Conference some who would not acknowledge the authority of the test resolutions. They were left without being called on to avow their decision, in the hope that the fate of others would frighten them into submission. The desired effect was not produced in all. In the winter of 1860—after it was demonstrated that the General Conference would afford no relief—Rev. Asa Abell and Rev. C. D. Brooks and Rev. A. F. Curry, withdrew from the Genesee Conference and from the M. E. Church.

At the Conference held at Albion, in 1861, complaints were made against Rev. Amos Hard for affiliating with those who had been expelled and those who had withdrawn. His

health was not sufficient to enable him to take the responsibility of a circuit, but he was able to preach once on the Sabbath; and he felt deeply for the salvation of souls and was anxious to do all he could to induce and help his fellow-men to prepare for heaven. He preached holiness—non-conformity to the world, and hence was not invited by the members of his Conference to preach but three times during the year. So he obeyed the discipline, and went to those who wanted him. When arraigned before the Conference, his friend, Rev. H. Hornsby, modestly ventured a few words in his behalf. The case of Mr. Hard was left with a committee to be investigated during the year; and attention was directed to his friend who was so "contumacious" as to interpose in his defense.

"You are in the same boat with this man!" exclaimed Rev. J. B. Wentworth, "and we will attend to you, and though your character has been passed it shall be reconsidered.

A committee consisting of A. P. Ripley, J. B. Wentworth and A. L. Backus, was, on his motion, appointed to investigate the case of Rev. H. Hornsby.

The committee in his case reported that at different times during the year he had attended irregular meetings, and officiated with expelled members of the M.

E. Church, and closed with the following resolution, viz.:

"That he make open and frank confession of his faults in the matters above enumerated, and that he promise to conform in his conduct and administration in the future, to the resolutions adopted at the Brockport Conference."

The Conference accepted the report and adopted the resolution. This report was presented in the forenoon, and he was called upon to answer to the resolutions. He told the Conference that he opposed the passage of the resolutions at Brockport, and refused to submit to them at that time, and was of the same mind now. Conference adjourned at noon, and in the afternoon session, his case had the floor. C. D. Burlingham and S. C. Church tried to get the matter dismissed, but no! Dr. Chamberlayne, T. Carlton and J. B. Wentworth said no! It was submission, abject submission, such as no *man* would give, much less a Christian minister. He told them from the beginning he should not promise to be governed by the resolutions, as he would not bend. A. D. Wilbor came to him and said, "Now, Bro. H., you seem determined to make the Conference come to your terms, why not say *yes*, and it will be all right."

It was after five in the afternoon when his case was sent to the committee for trial. At seven P. M. that evening, T. Carlton was appointed prosecutor. Mr. Hornsby asked for the charges, if he was to be tried. Thomes Carlton replied, "They will be furnished in time." Mr. Hornsby went at the appointed time. Carlton came at 7:20, and gave him the Bill of Charges. "Contumacy. In violating a series of reso-

lutions." Fourth specification was "refusing to confess to his sin in contemning the advice of the Conference in his case." He asked to locate. "No," says K. D. Nettleton, "if Mr. Hornsby should locate, he would be loose, and cause us more trouble than he has already. I think we had better go on with the case." He asked to be permitted to withdraw. The request was granted. The Conference did not know what the charges were upon which he was to be tried. It might infer what they would be, but they were never read in Conference. Neither did he have any time to prepare for trial. Common decency was trampled upon. Some of them seemed in a hurry to get him out. Some said, "He is a Nazarite all over, and may as well go now as any time."

In Illinois the work began in a similar manner.

In the fall of 1855, Rev. D. H. Sherman was appointed to St. Charles. He found the church in a low state. During the winter, he held several services, with some success. At length the work came to a dead stand. In his extremity he wrote to Dr. Redfield, with whom he was acquainted, who was then laboring in Rochester, N. Y. Brother Redfield declined coming, unless he was invited by the official board. The board passed a resolution inviting him to come. He came in April and labored until the first of June. Much good was done. Many were converted and sanctified. Some awful cases of iniquity were brought to light by his faithful dealing, such as theft, drunkenness and adultery. The following two years, Rev. Charles French was pastor. He invited Brother Redfield to

assist him several times, but such was the unwillingness of a few prominent members to come to the light, and help along the work, that the Doctor thought nothing could be done, and declined. Brother French was followed by Rev. S. G. Havermale. Such seemed to be the spirit of the man, that the Doctor's friends thought the two could work well together. A petition, signed by a large majority of the church, was sent to the official board,asking that Brother Redfield be invited to come and hold a meeting. It was granted by a fair majority. But such was the opposition of the minority, that the matter was left with the pastor. He decided not to invite him, and informed Brother Redfield so by a line through the post office. In the fall of 1859, Rev. D. C. Howard was appointed to the charge. There seemed to be such a desire to hear Brother Redfield preach, as he was about to leave for the South, not only by a large majority of the church, but by the people outside, that Elisha Foot and J. M. Laughlin called on the pastor and requested him to invite the Doctor to preach. This the pastor refused. The Baptist people were at this time without preaching, and one of the Doctor's friends suggested to them to invite him to fill their pulpit the following Sunday. This was done and the Doctor preached to a crowded house. Arrangements were made for him to preach the following Sunday, During the week, some influences led the Baptist people to withdraw their invitation, and the Universalists offered their church. As it was now too late to withdraw the Doctor's appointment, that offer was accepted, and the Doctor preached in their church. On Monday Mr. Howard

appointed a committee to wait on the leading members of his church who went to hear the Doctor preach. This committee informed them that it was necessary to confess that they had done wrong, and to pledge themselves to do so no more. If they would not do this they could have their choice of two things: First, take letters in good standing from the church. Second, be expelled.

The persons labored with did not feel that they had done wrong, and did not wish to remove from the church. That day Mr. Howard went, it was supposed, to Evanston to counsel with Bishop Simpson. On his return, he reported that the Bishop's opinion was that the official board was competent to declare those withdrawn who had been to hear Doctor Redfield preach. Consequently fourteen were declared withdrawn by the official board Wednesday evening—one of whom was not a member of the church, and never had been, as the list of membership would have shown. This was Sister Monroe, now dead. Five of the remaining thirteen were mere members of the board of trustees of nine.

Doctor Redfield preached on Monday and Tuesday evenings, with great power, and several were converted. When he saw the trouble that was to ensue, he ceased, and the following week started for the South.

On Thursday evening these "withdrawn" persons were in their usual places at the church prayer meeting, but were not allowed by the pastor to take part in the exercises. At the close of the meeting they were read out of the church. About fifty more asked for letters, but were offered letters of withdrawal which they refused. Hoping that time would make

all things right, these persons the following week rented a small hall as a temporary place of meeting. J. G. Terrill, a local preacher from Elgin, visited them at this juncture, and was invited to preach for them. He consented. A revival broke out, in which many of the hardest in the community were converted. It was found necessary to have some kind of an organization for the care of these, and a band was formed by adopting the general rules of the M. E. Church, with the exception of the one on slavery. In the meantime, the old society elected five trustees in the place of the ones declared withdrawn, and that in violation of the statutes of the State, which make no provision for vacancies in that manner. Besides, these persons so declared withdrawn, were the old, tried members of the church, men who had been the principal means of building up the church property.

April 27th, 1860, these brethren were convinced against their hopes that there was no redress for their grievances, and organized themselves into an independent church, with the name of Free Methodist. At this time they numbered 112 members. The five trustees declared "withdrawn" by the official board of the old church, were elected trustees of the new. They were Elisha Foote, John M. Sangle, Ira D. Tyler, Warren Tyler and Ephraim Collar.

A friend, still a member of the old society, took the question to the Conference (the Rock River) in the fall. The Conference approved of the act of Mr. Howard, but declared against any such thing being done in the future.

Near Marengo, Ill., the entire Bishop family, consisting of five persons, were expelled for "neglecting

the public worship of God at the Franklinville church, where they belonged." They went to Marengo to hear Dr. Redfield, and labored in revival meetings at school houses in the region around. If their neglect had been from worldly motives, no notice would have been taken of it; but as they gave their money and influence—not to fight holiness—but to promote it, they were expelled from the church.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE APPEALS.

In the Methodist Episcopal Church, the General Conference is the Court of Appeals, in the case of ministers.

Of the General Conference held in 1860, large expectations were entertained. It was not doubted by the people at large but that justice would be done in the several appeals that had been made for their decision. At first, everything looked favorable. Fifteen hundred members had petitioned them to give to the Genesee Conference difficulties a fair, full, and impartial investigation, and to apply such remedies as in their wisdom they might judge right and proper. When these petitions were presented, the delegates from the Genesee Conference professed to desire a rigid examination into all their acts.

"We have done right," said Rev. James M. Fuller, "and are not afraid to have our conduct looked into. We want the troubles probed to the bottom." At the close of his speech he moved that the petitions be referred to a special committee of nine, to be appointed by the chair!

As it was apparent that the object of this motion was to prevent an impartial scrutiny into Genesee Conference affairs, after an animated discussion it was voted down, and the matter was referred to a special committee, to be composed of one from each Conference, each delegation to select its own member. The committee was appointed, and the petitions and memorials were referred to it. All felt that the committee was an able and impartial one, and confidence was strong that justice would be done at last.

A few days after this committee was appointed, the Rev. William Reddy offered a resolution authorizing this committee to investigate fully the nature and origin of the Genesee Conference difficulties, giving them access to all the official papers, with power to avail themselves of any reliable information, at their discretion.

This resolution was stoutly opposed by the delegates from the Genesee Conference. James M. Fuller denied the power of the General Conference to overhaul the papers of the Genesee Conference, or to appoint special committees to pry into their proceedings. His Conference "would not submit, unless compelled to it, to any star-chamber investigations!" His tone was exactly the opposite of that which

he had assumed a few days before, when he doubtless expected to get a committee of a different complexion. He moved that the special committee be discharged! He said that in politics he was a state's rights man, and in religious matters, he was a Conference rights man.

Rev. Henry Slicer of the Baltimore Conference, supported Mr. Fuller's motion, in a violent speech, of the plantation style. He talked about "star-chamber" proceedings, and maintained the right of Genesee Conference to be let alone. F. G. Hibbard, W. H. Goodwin, W. Cooper of the Philadelphia Conference, and G. Hildt, of East Baltimore, spoke in the same strain.

Dr. Peck moved the previous question. Debate was cut off, and the committee discharged!

It was evident to the dullest, that in the interval since this special committee was appointed, powerful influences had been secretly at work among the delegates, in favor of the controlling party in the Genesee Conference. Suspicions of corrupt combinations were aroused in the minds of many. The memorials and petitions which had been referred to this special committee, were referred to the committee on Itinerancy—a committee which had

all the routine business to do that it could well attend to; and it is doubtful if the chief memorial was even read. Nothing that could be called an investigation was had, and the matter was given the go-by, as was doubtless intended.

The action of the General Conference in an appeal case that came before it, from one of the Ohio Conferences, weakened still further, confidence in its integrity, as a body. A member of that Conference had been expelled, the daily papers said, for licentious conduct with nine young ladies of his congregation. When a knowledge of his guilt came before the public, he left that part of the state, and went into business. His presiding elder wrote to him to come back and stand a trial. He did so. Both were high Masons. This presiding elder was elected a delegate, we believe. Such was the reputation of this expelled preacher for his profligate manners, that though he had formerly been stationed in Buffalo, it was said that not a Methodist family was willing to receive him. His appeal was heard, and he was promptly restored!

Meeting Brother Purdy soon after this decision was announced, we said to him, "There is hope for us. A W. has been restored."

"O!" said he, in his peculiar way, "That won't help your cases any. A. W. has been

loyal! He has not even had family prayer or asked a blessing since he was turned out. He has been loyal!"

We endeavored to have our appeals come before the Conference as a body. We knew that in the selection of a committee, our opponents would have every advantage. They knew how the members in general stood affected in relation to the issues that were between us. We did not.

A Court of Appeals was organized. It consisted of one delegate from each Conference, selected by the respective delegations. The right of challenge for cause was awarded to both parties. At least two-thirds of the whole must hear each case, a majority of whom should decide it. Their decision in all matters coming before them was to have the same force as the decision of the General Conference, as a body.

Before this tribunal our appeal cases were presented.

My first case, in which I appealed from the decision of the Genesee Conference, reproving me for saying, in my article entitled "New School Methodism," what I do not say, was entertained. After hearing the documents read and the case presented, the committee were equally divided on the question of affirming the

decision of the General Conference! They stood evenly balanced in judgment whether a Methodist minister should, or should not, be held responsible for the perversion which his enemies might put upon his language! In civil courts the Judge instructs the jury to give the prisoner the benefit of a doubt. In this religious court the Bishop decided that a failure to acquit was a conviction, and therefore the sentence of the Genesee Conference must stand affirmed!

When the next appeal case came up, I began to exercise my right of challenging for cause, members of the committee. Two were set aside. I was not then allowed to challenge any farther, though I assigned as the cause, that those objected to had published hostile articles against me in the papers. My objections were overruled. I have been credibly informed that it was the evident unfairness of the committee towards me in the outset that made one Bishop vacate the chair, because he did not wish to be a party to the wrong. A Bishop of strong pro-slavery proclivities took his place.

Our opposers evidently felt that so great was the lack of evidence to sustain the charges on which they expelled us, that even this committee could not be depended upon to sustain their verdict. Notwithstanding all their professions

of a desire to have the action of the Genesee Conference reviewed by the General Conference, they directed all their energies to prevent the appeals from being entertained. They had already secured the discharge of the special committee appointed to investigate Genesee Conference affairs. If now they could shut out the appeals, their action would stand unexamined and unrebuked by the highest authority in the church. *For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved*—John iii., 20.

The efforts at suppression were successful.

The majority voted not to entertain my appeal from the verdict of the Genesee Conference, sentencing me to expulsion from the church. Why the same committee should hear my appeal from the sentence of reproof, and, a few days later refuse to entertain my appeal from the sentence of expulsion, remains among the unsolved mysteries.

As their final decision was announced, I said, "I APPEAL TO GOD AND THE PEOPLE."

As the appeal cases came up one after another, the committee voted *not to entertain them*, with the single exception of the appeal of Mr. Burlingham.

Bishop Simpson, who took a lively interest

in these proceedings, assigns as the reason for this action, "As they had declined to recognize the authority of the church, and had continued to exercise their ministry and to organize societies, the General Conference declined to entertain the appeal."

These statements are NOT TRUE. We had not declined to recognize the authority of the church. Our bringing our appeals was a recognition of its authority. So was also the act of joining on probation. I do not know a single particular in which we failed of a proper recognition of church authority.

We did *not* "continue to exercise our ministry." We did not perform a single function peculiar to the minister of the Gospel. We married none—we baptized none—we did not administer or help administer the sacrament of the Lord's supper. We did no more than the discipline of the M. E. Church says is expected of all who have "a desire to flee from the wrath to come, and to be saved from their sins,"—manifested that desire, as it says we should, by "doing good" to the souls of men, "by instructing, reproving, or exhorting all we have any intercourse with." That was all we did. Was the Bishop unwilling that we should, when out of the church, make an honest effort to save our souls?

In one sense, we did not organize societies—in another we did. In the sense of a local church, connected with other local churches we did not organize any. But we did organize "praying bands" after the model furnished in the old discipline, and similar to the "holiness bands" now becoming somewhat common in the M. E. Church.

At Buffalo, when we went there, there was a Free Methodist Episcopal Church in which the seats were neither rented nor sold. It was located on 13th street; and was owned by Mr. Jesse Ketchum, a Congregationalist, who freely gave the use of it to the Methodists. It was a mission—feeble in numbers and influence. Mr. Edward P. Cox, who was put in charge of the building by Mr. Ketchum, invited us to hold a meeting there one week day evening when there was no appointment. We consented. The presiding elder, and other preachers told Mr. Cox that if he permitted us to speak there, they would take away the preacher and the missionary appropriation. Mr. Cox was an Englishman, and was not to be driven in that way. He said "they could do as they liked; the house would be open for Mr. Roberts at the time." They were as good as their word. As common humanity would dictate, I looked after these deserted ones, held meetings in the

church, and many were saved. A free-seated church was needed in Buffalo, and had we been restored, the society would doubtless have been taken back with us.

Mr. Stiles had formed a church at Albion, but as he took no appeal he had a perfect right to do it.

But even if Bishop Simpson's statements were true, they would not constitute a valid reason why our appeals should not be heard upon their merits. We were only claiming the rights that were solemnly promised us by the M. E. Church in its book of discipline when we united with it. In the very constitution of the church is an article which says of the General Conference :

THEY SHALL NOT DO AWAY THE PRIVILEGES *of our ministers or preachers of trial by a committee and of an appeal.*

This prohibition is general. It does not say they shall not do it in some particular way, but they shall not do it at all. It does not say they shall not do it under some pretexts—but they shall not do it under any pretext whatever. They shall not do it by hostile enactments, or by precedents, or by arbitrary refusals to hear appeals.

The only condition contained in the discipline was in these words—"Provided, never-

theless, that in all the above mentioned cases of trial and conviction, *an appeal to the* ensuing General Conference *shall be allowed if the condemned person signifies his intention to appeal, at the time of his condemnation, or at any time thereafter when he is informed thereof.*" There is only one condition here expressed. No one claimed that this condition had not been met. If there is any meaning in language then, a General Conference administering these laws had no right to refuse to allow an appeal. In doing it, they violated, in the interest of wrong, the *plainly expressed written* constitution of the church.

This law did not give a General Conference original jurisdiction over preachers. They had no right to *try us*, but our *appeal cases.* The question for them to decide was: Were those men fairly tried according to the discipline? Did the law and the facts justify the verdict of the Genesee Conference in these several cases?

If we had violated the laws of the church after our expulsion, then the Genesee Conference could, if we were restored, try us for such violation.

Nor should our appeals have been injured by our joining the church again on probation. A few years previous to these difficulties, the Chautauqua Presbytery deposed a minister.

He joined the Methodists; after awhile was licensed, and preached among them several years. The Presbytery afterwards becoming satisfied of his innocence, restored him to his ministerial standing, though he was at the time an accredited minister of another denomination. They told him they wished, as far as they could, to repair the wrong they had done him, and he was at liberty to remain in which ever church he chose. He went back to the Presbyterians.

Concerning these appeal cases, the Rev. William Hosmer wrote:

> The General Conference *assumes powers* which *do not* belong to it, when they make the right to have an appeal heard depend upon anything the appellant has done since the decision from which he appeals.
>
> In doing this, they must first try the appellant upon his general conduct since his trial from the decision of which he appeals, in order to determine whether his appeal shall be entertained or not! But the Discipline does not give the General Conference original jurisdiction over any of the ministers except the Bishops. They have no more right than Judge Lynch has, to try a preacher unless his case comes before them on an appeal, and then they must be confined to the testimony taken in the lower court.
>
> If the conduct of an expelled preacher pending his appeal, has not been correct, let him, if unjustly deposed, be restored, and then he is responsible to his Conference for his actions while suspended. The

General Conference is authorized to try appeal cases, but not preachers. For them to undertake to do that, is an unwarrantable and odious assumption of power.

What does the right of appeal amount to, if the security of its exercise depends upon the prejudice or caprice of a majority of a committee!

The appeal of Mr. Roberts should have been heard, *because the majority was committed against him* BEFORE ANY COMPLAINT WAS MADE OR CHARGE PREFERRED.

There is nothing guarded with greater jealousy by the common law, than the impartiality of juries. A person put on trial before its tribunals, may challenge all day "for cause." Let it be shown that the jury had, by any acts, committed themselves before the trial, and the verdict would be set aside.

The necessity of an impartial jury is as great in ecclesiastical as in criminal trials—when character, as when life is at stake. The credit of religion, as well as the security of the individual, demands no less. A verdict obtained by connivance, or by partisan excitement, is none the more to be respected because it was rendered under religious forms, by men professing godliness.

It is well known that at the time of these trials, the Genesee Conference was divided into two parties; —that this partisan feeling, which had existed for years, was wrought up to the greatest intensity—that at the Conference which instituted the first of these trials, the party opposed to the appellant for the first time became a majority, several of the opposite party having been transferred to other Conferences—and that it was by this accidental, excited and thorough-

ly partisan majority that Mr. Roberts was tried. This being the case, and the trial resulting as it did, if there ever was an instance where the corrective agency of an appellate court was needed, that case was the one under consideration.

If there is any analogy between an ecclesiastical court and a civil court, then the necessity was even greater than we have stated, and so far from not entertaining the appeal, the court should have annulled the previous trial, and sent the case back for a new investigation, if a trial was judged to be necessary. But, admitting the validity of the action of the court below, we see not how it was possible for this appellate court to refuse to entertain the appeal. The hearing of cases is not optional with such a court—an appeal always lies if the party appealing gives due notice of his intention, and is on hand to prosecute his claims. Not to entertain an appeal is, therefore, a palpable dereliction from duty; and, in this instance, it was equivalent to saying that, so far as these expelled brethren were concerned, there should be no appellate court in the M. E. Church—thus practically annihilating one of the most important branches of our judiciary, and rendering it forever impossible to correct the errors of the court below. Well might the appellant stand aghast at such treatment, and make his appeal to God and the people. The judicial infatuation which has rendered it necessary to transfer this and other like cases, from an earthly to a heavenly tribunal, we deplore, but cannot help. The deed is done, and, with all its appalling consequences, the record must go up to God. We have the satisfaction of knowing that we have not been

awed by authority, nor terrified by threats, into silence in the presence of such wrongs. The senseless, shameless cry of "Nazaritism," we fling back with the hearty contempt which it merits. Those who indulge in this low style of abuse, should remember that there are people in the world who are not afraid of slang, and who will not desert the innocent because malice, for the accomplishment of its own purposes, heaps upon them disparaging epithets. To defend the injured should be regarded as a virtue, not as a crime; and whatever the meaning or the madness of persecution may inflict, we had far rather share it with the oppressed, than betray them to the clutches of a relentless tyranny."

The action of the General Conference, in the case of Rev. C. D. Burlingham, was a still greater insult to justice and to common sense. His case was sent back for a new trial when there was nothing to try! But we prefer to give the comments of the *Northern Independent* on the case:

"That the Court of Appeals, constituted by the last General Conference, did not do its work so as to secure either divine or human respect, is a conclusion forced upon us by every view we have been able to take of the subject. Gladly would we pass by these judicial proceedings without further notice, if it were allowable, but they are of too serious a character, and will be found too far reaching in their consequences, to admit of silent acquiescence. Ecclesiastical courts are not famous for liberality and justice, but we believe the courts of Methodism have not generally

sunk to the level indicated by the trial of these appeals.

First in order, was the case of Rev. C. D. Burlingham. He was expelled from the Genesee Conference, and from the M. E. Church, for doing three things:

1st. Admitting B. T. Roberts into the church on trial.

2d. Licensing him to exhort.

3d. Officiating with expelled preachers at a general quarterly meeting held in a Wesleyan church, at the same time that his presiding elder was holding a regular quarterly meeting in the same charge, about three miles distant. Mr. Burlingham admitted the facts alleged, but pleaded other facts in justification.

These were the only offences with which Mr. Burlingham was charged.

After his expulsion, he waited silently for the General Conference. He did not preach, nor lecture, nor exhort—did not attend meetings held by expelled preachers—but did *penance* up to the session of the General Conference. He should have been restored on the ground of having expiated his guilt, if he were guilty of any ordinary offence, if on no other. When his appeal came up, Mr. Fuller, who has been chief prosecutor in all these trials, challenged several of the committee who had manifested a desire to have Genesee Conference matters fairly investigated. Though the General Conference, in constituting the committee, or Court of Appeals, had given to parties the right to challenge *for cause*, yet Mr. Fuller, after the first instance, was not required to give *cause*, but challenged as many as he chose, *and they were set*

aside. He simply said of the challenged, that "he considered them prejudiced."

Mr. Olin, of the Oneida Conference, managed the case for Mr. Burlingham with consummate tact, and great ability. His plea was a masterly effort, and carried conviction to the minds,we believe, of all who heard it, except the committee. *They sent the case back to the Genesee Conference for a new trial.* This we regard as a remarkable decision. Neither party asked for it. We never heard before of a case being remanded for a new trial, unless there was some alleged informality in the court below, or defect in the record, or unless one or the other of the parties claimed to have new testimony which could not be introduced into the first trial. But nothing of the kind was intimated in this case. There can be no new testimony, for Mr. Burlingham admitted all the facts with which he was charged.

Do these facts, mentioned above, constitute a crime, for which an able minister, of spotless reputation,who has served the church for over twenty years, devoting the vigor of his manhood's prime, in self sacrificing efforts to promote her interests, should be expelled? Then let the General Conference say so, that all who henceforth enter the Methodist ministry, may understand that they are expected to lay their manhood in the dust, part with the right of private judgment, and yield a servile,unquestioning obedience to all the behests of their ecclesiastical superiors.

Was Mr. Burlingham, through party malignity, treated unjustly ? Was he wrongfully deposed from the ministry, and excluded from the church ? Then the General Conference should have restored him.

This was due to him ; it was due to outraged justice —it was due to the M. E. Church, whose discipline, confessedly more susceptible of abuse than that of any other church in this country, has been used for the purpose of inflicting ecclesiastical oppression without a parallel, in the nineteenth century.

But the General Conference, through its committee, or Court of Appeals, after gravely listening to the testimony and pleadings, sent the case back for a new trial, without a motion to that effect, from either party. *What*, we ask, is there to try? There can be no issue on the facts—these are admitted.

But Mr. Burlingham contends that these facts do not constitute a crime for which he should be deposed from the ministry, and excluded from the Church.

The Genesee Conference has said that they do. Here is the issue—who shall decide? The discipline vests the power in the General Conference—the body to try appeals. The case was properly brought before them, and they have sent it back, for the Genesee Conference to decide over again. What an absurd decision ! What an insult to Mr. Burlingham, and to common sense ! Suppose the views of law and justice entertained by the Genesee Conference remain unchanged, and the same sentence be again pronounced against Mr. Burlingham, and he again appeals. After waiting four years for another General Conference, if he still survive, there will not only be the same reason for sending the case back for a new trial as now, but the additional one of precedent. Thus, this mockery of justice may continue *ad infinitum.*

This looks more like the tiger playing with the victim he intends to devour, than like a body of Christian ministers, bound by every consideration that can influence to right action, to 'judge righteous judgment.'

Another fact is worthy of especial notice. Though the decision in the case was not asked for *in court* by either party, yet it is precisely what partisans of the regency party of the Genesee Conference have been endeavoring for months to persuade Mr. Burlingham to consent to. These efforts were continued up to the morning of the day on which the appeal was heard. Yet neither in their pleadings, nor at any time while the appeal was being heard, did the counsel for the Conference signify their wish that the case might be remanded for a new trial. At whose suggestion was it done? When was the suggestion made? Was there any collusion in the matter? It is impossible for us to answer these questions. View it in whatever light you may, the whole case has a dark and suspicious aspect.

Perhaps some clue to an explanation of the strange proceedings in relation to the Genesee Conference appeal cases, may be found in the action had upon the slavery question.

The Genesee Conference has heretofore been one of the strongest anti-slavery Conferences in the connection. The proscribed party have, from the first, been uncompromising in their hostility to slavery in the Church and in the state.

The Genesee delegates to the late General Conference were once regarded as anti-slavery; what they are now their votes will show. We asserted last

fall, that the Conference had become pro-slavery, and gave as proof the fact, that while it condemned this paper, it refused to take any action against slavery. The truth of our inference was denied by some, but the recent course of their delegates has made our words good. When the important question was decided in the General Conference upon a change of constitution, so as to prohibit slave-holding in the church, the delegates of the Genesee Conference voted against a change, *and their vote turned the scale.* And when the Genesee Conference matters came up, *the border pro-slavery delegates voted solid with the representatives of the majority of the Genesee Conference.* This may be all fair. It may be that men who, four years ago took the stump to keep slavery out of the territories, have suddenly become convinced that it should be nestled and fostered in the bosom of the church! We should like to know by what arguments they were converted, and when it was done! Was this a part of a scheme to keep slaveholders in the church? Did the border delegates understand that if they voted as desired by the Genesee delegates, they would reciprocate the favor, and assist them in their extremity? Or did this strange coincidence come about by chance?

How came the General Conference to take such action? It seems incredible that so large and respectable a body could be guilty of so great injustice. We answer:

1. The charge of doing any specified wrong is not met by claiming or conceding general re-

spectability for the body which did it. The Congress which passed the Fugitive Slave Law was a highly respectable body. President Fillmore, who signed it, was a highly respectable man. Yet that law made every free man at the North liable to become a slave-hunter or a law-breaker.

2. This General Conference had in it a large number of Masons and Oddfellows. When it is known before hand that the Secret Society question is to be made an issue, it is an easy thing for those belonging to these societies in the various Conferences of the M. E. Church to send an unusually large proportion of their friends to a General Conference.

3. In the discipline of the M. E. Church are important rules which the preachers not only openly disregard, but teach the people to disregard. On dress, their rule forbids "the putting on of gold and costly apparel;"—in practice they generally put on both,—often beyond their means,—and many preachers defend the practice. In church building, the rule required them to be plain and cheap;—the practice was to build as expensively as credit,—and means not unfrequently obtained by pew-selling and church gambling, would permit. The result of "holding the truth in unrighteousness" is the demoralization of the con-

science. The law of present expediency comes to be the rule of conduct. Policy takes the place of conscience.

4. The General Conference at Buffalo was held just before the breaking out of the civil war. The Nation and the Church were greatly agitated on the Slavery question. With many, it was the great question before the General Conference of 1860. The Genesee Conference had for years been classed as a radical abolitionist Conference. The Baltimore Conference was considered on the point of religious experience, committed to old-fashioned Methodism, but was at the same time the champion of the slave-holders in the M. E. Church. At the General Conference at Buffalo, the delegates from Baltimore and the delegates from Genesee, when these issues came up, talked and voted lovingly together. Herod and Pilate became friends. Baltimore helped Genesee to dispose of the "Nazarites;" and Genesee helped Baltimore to substitute for the *rule* against slave-holding, some good, but powerless advice. We do not *say* there was any bargain to this effect —we have no proof of it—but we do not believe that at that late day the Genesee delegates were really converted to pro-slavery doctrines. Nor do we believe that the border delegates were converted to the religious theories

of the Genesee delegates. They still invite Fay H. Purdy, who was called the ring-leader of "the sect called Nazarites," to labor in that section.

The appeal cases were referred to a committee. Thomas Carlton had visited the Conferences as book agent, and was acquainted with the delegates generally. That he *could* exercise an influence in the selection of the Committee of Appeals is easily seen. That he would not scruple to do it is evident from the case mentioned by Dr. Bowen, in which Thomas Carlton bore a prominent part, as counsel for a so-called Regency preacher, accused by one of the members of the church of gross, intentional dishonesty. Before the trial commenced, Mr. Carlton had the parties agree to abide by the decision of the arbitrators. Each party was to choose two, and the four were to choose the fifth. Mr. Carlton selected two preachers; the other party, two highly respectable laymen. They could not agree upon the fifth. At length Mr. Carlton suddenly remembered that he had seen on the hotel register, (it was at Niagara Falls), the name of a preacher from New York. He would help them out. All agreed upon him. The case was heard and the preachers gave a most unrighteous verdict against the laymen. *This*

fifth man was afterwards found out to be Thomas Carlton's brother-in-law, whom he had brought there on purpose.

Of the truth of what is here affirmed there can be no question. Yet, in that case there was nothing like the inducement to unfairness that there was in the cases appealed from the decision of the Genesee Conference.

As touching the effect of the action of this General Conference held at Buffalo on the slavery question, we quote from the *American Wesleyan*, of March 27th, 1861:

"OFFICIAL EXPOSITION OF LAW.

In the Baltimore Conference, recently in session, the following questions were proposed to Bishop Scott, and answered by him. We are glad that after so much evasion as has filled up the history of the M. E. Church upon the anti-slavery attitude of this body, we are at last in possession of an official decision, too plain to be misunderstood. Here are the points—look at them! A slaveholder can be admitted a member of the church, ordained, and hold slaves for *gain*, and there is no discipline in the church by which to arraign him, or object to him. Can anything be more abhorrently plain than this?

The following questions were presented to the chair, and promptly answered:

1. Is there anything in the discipline which, in your judgment, would be a bar to the ordination of a local preacher holding slaves? Answer—No.

2. Anything in the discipline which, in your judg-

ment, would operate against the admission of a slaveholder into the church? Answer—No.

3. Anything in the discipline that would justify an administrator in arraigning a slaveholder? Answer—No.

4. Is there any process authorized in the discipline by which a member can be brought to trial who holds slaves for gain? Answer—I know of no such process.

CHAPTER XIV.

REVIEWS.

In this chapter we will notice some points in Bishop Simpson's article on "The Free Methodists," which we have not referred to in the preceding pages; and also the article on "Nazaritism," in Mr. Conable's "History of the Genesee Conference of the M. E. Church.

In Bishop Simpson's article, the statements as we have numbered them, from 1 to 11, and also numbers 13 and 15, we think have been, in the preceding pages, clearly shown to be untrue.*

The Bishop says that the Free Methodists do not admit any members, even on probation, "without a confession of saving faith in Christ," and adds, (12)

"The reason alleged by them is, that much of the defection in other churches is due to the fact that multitudes who have joined the church as inquirers, have failed to pursue a strictly spiritual life."

Where do the Free Methodists assign any such reason for such action? They do not in their discipline. They never have in any Conference action. I never heard any individual among them assign any such reason. The reason *they* give is, that there is no warrant in the New Testament for admitting a person into the church, even on probation, except on profession of saving faith in Christ.

*See Chapters II and III.

Again we quote from the same author:

14 "In its early history some of its leaders encouraged a spirit of wild fanaticism, claiming the power of healing by the laying on of hands."

Here are two untrue statements. The first, of encouraging "wild fanaticism," we have met in the preceding pages.* We have shown that such men as Drs. Reddy and Ives considered what the Bishop calls "wild fanaticism," as the proper manifestations of spiritual life.

As to "some of its leaders claiming the power of healing," this is also a mistake. None of them ever made any such claim. We acknowledge, with becoming gratitude and humility, that in answer to prayer there have been among us some remarkable cases of healing—but nothing more than has taken place among true Christians in all ages.

The most prominent person who has ever been among us, that we are aware of, who "claimed the power of healing by the laying on of hands," or any thing like it, was then, and is still, we suppose, a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church! He was never a Free Methodist—much less a leader!

We notice a few statement of the Bishop, which, though in a sense true, are misleading:

(*a*) "Became dissatisfied with the workings of its government."

We never had any special dissatisfaction with the "government" of the M. E. Church. We learned by experience that it was capable of great abuse. We were dissatisfied with the *administration*—first of the Genesee Conference, and then of the General Confer-

*See Chapter vi, page 118.

ence, in expelling the innocent and screening the guilty.

(*b*) "They professed themselves to be moved by the Holy Spirit".

No more so than Methodist preachers generally.

(*c*) "In Church polity the name of Bishop was abandoned, and a general superintendency substituted."

Not merely the name, but the ordination and the life tenure were abandoned. The General Superintendents are simply officers of the General Conference elected every four years.

(*d*) "The conference organizations were retained as in the M. E. Church, and laymen in numbers equal to the ministers were admitted to each of these bodies."

In the Free Methodist Church the lay delegates are not *admitted* to the Conferences—they, with the preachers, *compose the Conferences.* The lay delegates are elected directly by the members, and not indirectly by the preacher, through a quarterly conference, which, in part, is of his own creation. We are not afraid to trust our people.

(*e*) "The name of presiding elder was changed to that of district chairman."

But the district chairman may have a circuit the same as other preachers. Presiding elders do not.

(*f*) "They also require their members to be exceedingly plain in their dress."

No more so than the *discipline* of the M. E. Church requires its members.

We next call attention to the "History of the Genesee Annual Conference;" By Rev. F.W. Conable.

Perhaps we should say nothing of this book,

because of the little notice that has been taken of it by the public. But as it has been indorsed by the Genesee Conference, and ordered to be placed in its archives for reference, it becomes possessed of an importance as a historical record, which, in itself it does not possess. Of its literary pretensions we will not speak.

It is in its article on "Nazaritism" that we are more particularly interested. It is proper to say, in general terms, that its statements, both original and borrowed, under the head of "Nazaritism," are wholly incorrect. We will notice in detail, a few of its false statements:

"Nazaritism in fact, if not in name, originated with a few ministers of the Genesee Conference—J. H. Wallace, B. T. Roberts, J. McCreery, Jr. and others." (Page 628.)

This is incorrect both in form and fact. We have shown conclusively that there never was a "Nazarite Society," or any thing corresponding to it, among the ministers of the Genesee Conference. That by "Nazaritism" he means what in other Conferences is called "holiness," is evident from his associating the name of John H. Wallace with it. John H. Wallace had no relation with those expelled from the Genesee Conference, under the cry of their being "Nazarites," only, as before their day, he was a specially able advocate of the doctrine of holiness. Mr. Conable shows that he removed to Michigan before the difficulties in the Genesee Conference began. He also bears witness to his great ability and usefulness. But John H. Wallace fell, as other good men have fallen. So, to bring reproach upon the Free Metho-

dist Church, Mr. Conable tries to associate John H. Wallace with its origin. John H. Wallace had no more relation to it than other men had who preached holiness before it was thought of. This, Mr. Conable well knows.

Mr. Conable, says:

"That Roberts and McCreery and two presiding elders, were led on from motives of envy, jealousy and unchristian ambition in the endeavor to secure for *themselves* the 'chief patronage' of the Conference."

Does this man claim divine attributes that he is able to read men's motives?

This is not only false, but malignant, and foolish. Did not the two presiding elders already occupy the highest position in the Conference? They were placed there without any effort or desire of their own.

As to my humble self, no man can truthfully say that I ever, in any way, sought position in the M. E. Church. I never asked, directly or indirectly, for any appointment. Mr. Conable never even heard that I did, I will venture to say. The whole statement is utterly baseless! If I had then felt any ambition in that direction, it could have been easily gratified. After the leaders of the holiness movement were sent off—Rev. E. Thomas to California, and Messrs. Stiles and Kingsley to Ohio, I was offered, if I would leave the persecuted, holiness people, better appointments than the Genesee Conference had to give. Though Mr. Conable seems ignorant of it, there is such a thing as standing by the right from no other motive than a desire to do right, and obey God. In speaking of the Estes pamphlet, Mr. Conable says:

"The printer refused to testify as to the author-

ship, and we have no law to oblige attendance at an ecclesiastical court." (Page 646.)

Mr. Conable, and all of his indorsers who were at the Perry Conference, *know that this is not true.* The most unscrupulous, unless rendered desperate, seldom venture upon a falsehood so glaring. The printer of the Estes pamphlet *was* present at my trial! One of the preachers opposed to me, took him there and back, about seventy miles across the country in a carriage. *They did not* call upon him to testify.

Mr. H. N. Beach, editor of the *Brockport Republic*, the gentleman referred to, in a note to us, says:

"Rev. E. M. Buck got me to go to Perry in the case, at the time of the Conference; but I was not called to testify, because, I suppose, my evidence was not what was wanted."

Thus Mr. Conable crowds two known, great falsehoods into one short sentence. 1st. The printer did attend the court. 2d. He did not refuse to testify! And such statements are voted into the archives of the Genesee Conference as history, by men who know that there is not one word of truth in them!

In speaking of my trial, Mr. Conable says:

"The chief effort of Mr. Roberts in his protracted defense, was to convince the public—not that he had not written and circulated such allegations as were charged against him, but that the allegations were really true."—Page 647.

For this assertion Mr. Conable has no apology. He and his indorsers well know it is false. That I did not write the Estes pamphlet, I proved to the Conference in the most conclusive way that a man can prove he did not write any document,—by the

testimony of the real, avowed author, that he himself wrote it.

George Estes testified to the Conference: "Brother Roberts HAD NOTHING *to do with the writing of the part that bears my name.*"

Again, Mr. Conable says that the defendant had been

"According to his own public admission, granted every possible appliance for his aid, and defense, consistent with the discipline of the church."—Page 648.

This man seems utterly incapable of telling the truth about these matters! He knows that nearly two whole sessions were employed in my trying to obtain, and my opposers trying to prevent me from obtaining, either a change of venue, or a trial by a committee! He knows that I was refused the aid of the counsel I asked for!

In my closing plea, I thanked Bishop Janes for the able and impartial manner in which he had presided, and for the kind spirit he had manifested; but that does not warrant the above assertion. Yet it is all he has to make it out of.

Again, Mr. Conable says:

"The charges and specifications were voted sustained, by not far from two to one."—Page 648.

The minutes and Conference roll for that year show that there were one hundred and sixteen preachers in full connection in the Conference, at that time. Of these, fifty-four voted against me, and thirty-four for me, leaving a clear majority who did not vote to sustain the charges.

Some were terrified to that degree they did not

dare to vote for me—and they had too much conscience left to vote against me.

Mr. Conable says:

"Strange and fraudulent methods were employed to deprive presiding elders and regular pastors of their support."—Page 650.

What he means by this accusation, I cannot imagine. Many refused to pay "presiding elders and regular pastors," who had participated in the wicked acts of the majority. But in this there was nothing "strange or fraudulent." The "strange" part was that any honest man would help support any of them.

Mr. Conable, in apologizing for those he calls "loyal preachers," says:

"A few of them in their zeal in opposition to Nazaritism, and in order to the preservation of church order, overstepped the lines of administrative propriety a little, if not more, for which they suffered arrest and correction at the Conference." page 655.

The "arrest and correction" part is a piece of news, and we strongly suspect, a fabrication.

Again he says:

"One or more preachers in charge had illegally declared several members, Nazarites, withdrawn. This being reported to Conference by the parties deeming themselves injured, made some work."—Page 655.

What work? The members were *kept out*, and the preachers were passed all right.

Mr. Conable says:

"Charges, in some instances of a gross character, were preferred against one or more of the Presiding Elders and some other preachers at Conference, which could not be sustained!" (Page 655.)

Why could not these charges of "*a gross character*" be sustained? It was not for want of proof,

abundant, clear, conclusive, and of the highest order. It was for *want of a disposition to do right*, on the part of the majority. So they would not *entertain* most of these charges, or even hear a statement of the several cases, but promptly *voted to lay the whole matter* on the table. For the nature of some of these grave charges see pages 143-146 of this book.

Mr. Conable says :

" Roberts and Stiles united their fortunes in the secession movement, leading to the organization of "The Free Methodist Church." (Page 660.)

What ! drive men out of a church, after their most earnest efforts to stay in, and then call it a "secession movement !" Does this man take it for granted that his readers have not common sense ?

Again he says, same page :

" Which should be the greatest was a question, but the career of Stiles was short, as, early after building their church at Albion, and effecting a permanent church organization, he was called away by death. Roberts became " General Superintendent " of the Free Church, as such, of course, claiming ordaining authority."

There never was any question " which should be the greatest." None more gratefully and cordially than B. T. Roberts acknowledged the correctness of the popular verdict, that Loren Stiles was one of *the greatest* preachers in Western New York.

Mr. Stiles nominated Rev. B. T. Roberts for General Superintendent of the Free Methodist church, the first time he was elected to that office, and the vote for it was quite unanimous. The Superintendent did not " claim ordaining authority," whatever that

may mean. The discipline made it his duty to ordain those elected by an Annual Conference.

Conable says: "As to J. A. Wells, he lost confidence in B. T. Roberts."—Page 660. Where did Mr. Conable get this information? A man may join another denomination for other reasons than a loss of confidence. Mr. Wells, in a letter before us, says he "did not lose confidence in B. T. Roberts."

Of the Bergen Camp Ground, Mr. Conable says:

"The Bergen Camp Ground charter was changed by application to the legislature, and the clause which gave the Methodist Episcopal Church any control or supervision over the grounds, or meetings held there, was stricken out. This arrangement, however, to secure the Camp Ground to Nazarite uses, did not hold very long, as in due time, under the sanction of the Conference, measures were instituted which were successful in securing the same, according to the forms of law, to the Genesee Camp Ground Association, for the ownership and use of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in harmony with disciplinary provisions and church usage."

We will show what these "successful measures" were, and in so doing will give a brief history of this Camp Ground.

1. I made a bargain for the ground—twenty-five acres, intending to use it for a camp ground, if we could raise the money to pay for it. Meeting with encouragement, B. T. Roberts and Loren Stiles took a contract for the land, May 8th, 1856. On the 11th of July, 1856, it was deeded, by absolute conveyance, to Asa Abel, Benjamin T. Roberts, and Asa Allis.

2. The following winter I drew up the charter of "The Genesee Camp Ground Association," went to

Albany, and got it passed by the legislature. To this Association, we deeded the ground in trust.

3. After they began to expel the camp-meeting people, we got the charter amended.

4. The so called Regency party, held a camp-meeting on that ground after they had turned us out of the church. The trustees, all of whom but one became Free Methodists, made no opposition, but hoped it would do them good. But they assumed judicial powers and declared that those trustees who were not members of the M. E. Church were not legal trustees. Yet the law made no such qualifications for trustees. After declaring a vacancy they went on to elect themselves to the vacancy.

5. Having thus gained possession, they threatened us with a law suit if we went on the ground to hold any more meetings. We appointed no meetings for a few years, hoping to fairly settle the matter. We made them the following offers:

(1). We would hold the ground and let them hold camp meetings there whenever they wished, free of charge.

(2). Or they might hold the ground, and let us hold meetings when we wished.

(3). Or we would sell the ground and divide the proceeds among the two churches, in the proportion we had paid. Those who became Free Methodists had paid about two-thirds of the price of the ground.

All these offers they rejected.

6. To keep possession, they held sham camp-meetings for the election of trustees. At one time they had but one tent,—a canvass thrown over a pole.

Preachers, from the stand, preached to an audience seated in the stand.

7. We appointed a camp-meeting to be held there in June, 1867. They got out an injunction. We heard of it, and went to another ground with the meeting. The third day of the meeting, the Sheriff served the writ of injunction upon "B. T. Roberts, and all associated with him." The Sheriff was doubtless instructed to delay serving the writ in order to break up the meeting. The injunction was tried and we beat them. They then set men to work cutting wood on the camp-ground, to sell, to pay the costs.

8. The deed conveyed the land to the trustees, in trust, that they "shall not cut down or destroy, or cause, or permit or allow to be cut down or destroyed, the woods or trees, or any part thereof upon said piece or lot of land, except as may be necessary for the fencing of said lot, or the better fitting of it, for the purposes "of holding camp-meetings." We therefore got out an injunction restraining them from cutting down the timber.

9. On the trial, the so-called Regency trustees, among whom were three Conference preachers, swore that "all the trees and timber cut upon said camp-ground referred to" in the complaint, "were either lying upon the ground, or dead, unsound, and more or less decayed." "That said trees were old," "that no sound trees have been cut upon said ground;" "that the cutting and removal of said trees" "have not only benefited and improved it for the purposes of said Association, but was indispensable for the safety of those who might attend religious meetings upon said ground."

We could only swear to the stumps and wood. We found eighty-seven green, sound, stumps—the wood was also sound and green. They beat us of course.

It is scarcely necessary to add, after thus "improving" the ground, they ceased to hold camp-meetings there, and very soon after sold the ground.

One of the best lawyers in the state said, after thoroughly examining the case, "They have no right to that land, either in law, or in equity." But we have neither time nor taste for litigation, even were it an easy matter to obtain justice in our courts, against a power as great as that of the M. E. Church, aided by such secret society influence as it could control.

CHAPTER XV.

CONCLUSION.

The intelligent reader of the preceding pages can hardly fail to see:

1. That the Genesee Conference of the M. E. Church, stands convicted:

(1.) Of wickedly expelling several of its ministers from the Conference and the church without any adequate cause.

(2.) Of allowing preachers to expel worthy members from the church when they had violated no law of the church.

(3.) Of permitting its preachers to pronounce members in good standing in the church withdrawn, against their most solemn protest.

(4.) Of covering up iniquity, by refusing to entertain complaints, of dishonesty and fraud, made by responsible parties against several of its preachers.

2. That the Methodist Episcopal Church, as an ecclesiastical organization, for all these unchristian and wicked acts of the Genesee Conference, has assumed the responsibility before God and man, by the action of its General Conference, its highest Court of Appeals.

(1.) In refusing to entertain appeals, from the

injustice of the Genesee Conference, properly brought before it, which the constitution of the church requires it to hear and properly decide.

(2.) By not deciding upon its merits the case of Rev. C. D. Burlingham, who appealed to it for redress from an unjust and oppressive sentence, but iniquitously sending it back for a new trial when there was nothing to try. Whether this evasion of a clear and important duty was owing to a lack of courage to express their honest opinion of the sentence of expulsion from the Conference and the church, for the acts charged and admitted, or to a desire to shield the Genesee Conference from censure for wrong doing, it is equally deserving of reprobation.

(3.) By not investigating the troubles of the Genesee Conference over which they had jurisdiction, and giving such redress of the grievances complained of as justice demanded and they were able to render.

3. That historians of the M. E. Church seek to perpetuate the wrong, by giving accounts of these matters which every one acquainted with the facts knows to be untrue; and paying no attention to testimony of the highest order, when it conflicts with their unfounded statements.

4. We have no hostility towards the M. E. Church, its ministry, or its members. We love

all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, and we love no one the less because he belongs to the M. E. Church. Many in that church who love the truth, will be glad to learn the real facts in the case, as they have heard only misrepresentations. These misrepresentations repeated by parties in whom they have been accustomed to place confidence, they have innocently received as true. We have endeavored to state everything fairly, without exaggeration, and are certain we have done it without malice. We have the kindest feelings towards all.

APPENDIX.

At a Convention held at Pekin, in August, 1860, the Free Methodist Discipline was adopted, and B.T. Roberts elected General Superintendent.

The Genesee Conference of the Free Methodist Church was organized at Rushford, Allegany County, N. Y., under the Discipline, in October, 1860.

Five preachers were received into full connection, all of whom had been preachers in the M. E. Church.

Seven preachers were received on probation.

The total number of members reported we do not find recorded.

The Western Conference of the Free Methodist Church was organized under the Discipline, at Wayne, DuPage County, Ills., June. 14, 1861.

Three preachers were received into full connection, one of whom had been recently pastor of a Congregational church, and one, years before, had been a traveling preacher in the M. E. Church.

Twenty preachers were admitted on probation.

The total number of members reported was 511.

The first General Conference was held in October, 1862.

We give statistics for that year, and for each subsequent four years:

	1862	1866	1870	1874	1878
Members,	2,498	4,889	6,556	7,466	10,682
Preachers,	35	85	128	137	313
Value of Church property,					$358,290

Of the preachers now belonging to the Free Methodist Conferences, only nineteen, we believe, ever belonged to any Conference in the M. E. Church. So there does not seem to be any propriety in calling this movement a secession.

They have twelve Annual Conferences, extending from New York to Kansas.

They have founded two schools, of the rank of academies, which are in successful operation—one at North Chili, Monroe Co., N. Y., the other at Spring Arbor, Jackson Co., Mich.

There is, under the patronage of the denomination, a monthly magazine, THE EARNEST CHRISTIAN, devoted to experimental and practical piety. It was started in 1860 by its present editor and publisher, Rev. B. T. Roberts: also a weekly paper, *The Free Methodist*, published by Messrs. Baker & Arnold, at Sycamore, Ills. They also publish two Sabbath-school papers, *The Pearl* and *The Lily*.

As far as we can judge, the denomination is, on the whole, in a flourishing condition.

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